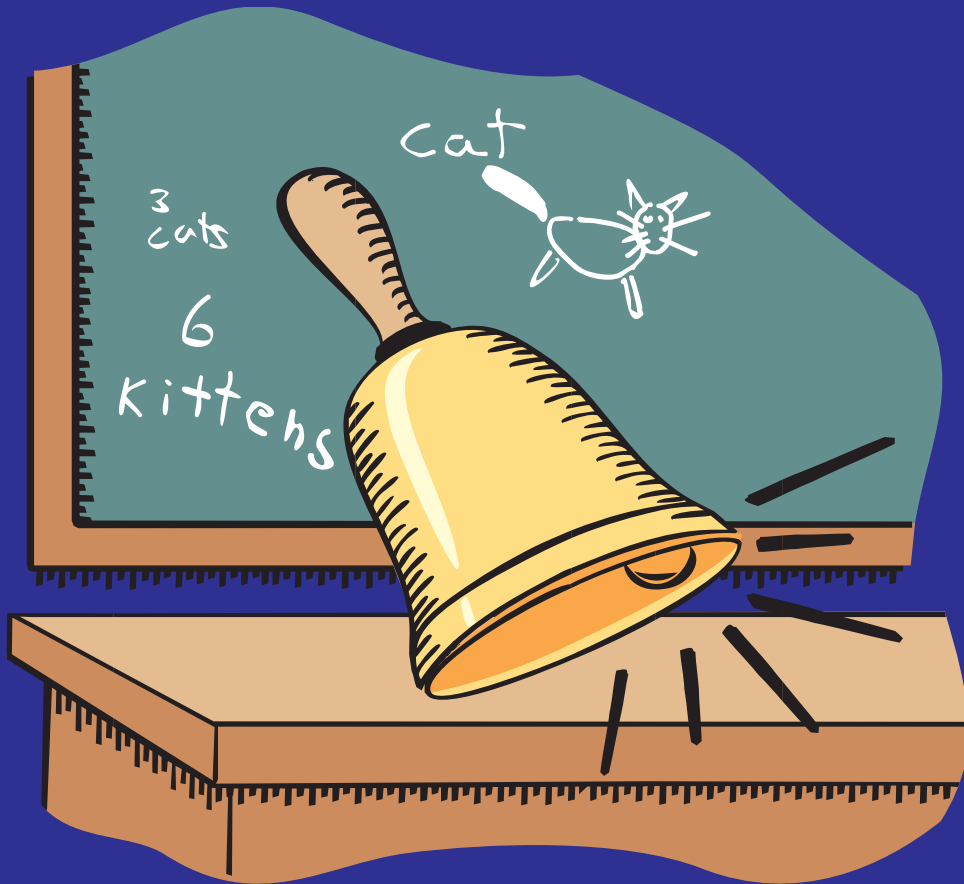


SCHOOLS IN BRUSSELS

A GUIDE FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT FAMILIES



JOINT ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES/COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE
(JAS/CLO)

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FOREWORD

This guidebook was prepared to give U.S. Government families a general idea of the schooling (pre-school through secondary) available in Brussels, its suburbs and Antwerp. Ideally, parents choosing primary and secondary schools should read this guide before their arrival at post while bearing in mind that enrollment and programs can change within a matter of months at some schools. Parents should contact the CLO or the individual schools directly for further information on fees, academic year schedule, and other specific information.

The information in this booklet gives only a basic description of schools and their programs. There is no attempt to evaluate the schools, all of which have positive and negative aspects in the eyes of parents whose children have attended them and since each child may have different needs, readers are encouraged to make their own evaluation by visiting the schools and talking to school administrators, faculty, counseling staff, students and parents.

The guide concentrates on fee-paying English language/international schools as well as Belgian schools because information on them is difficult for parents to obtain on their own prior to arrival in Brussels.

The report is divided into five parts. The first part provides general information about choosing a school in Brussels. The second part describes English language and international schools, starting with those three schools which U. S. Government families use the most. The third part describes English language and international pre-schools in Brussels. The Belgian school system and curriculum (which includes schools that teach either in French or Flemish) is the subject of the fourth section. Finally, there is an Appendix which includes information on the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. At the very end, where they are easy to find, are book and telephone reference lists.

For more information, please contact the Community Liaison Office (phone: 32-2-508-2227, 2289) or the Army Community Services Office (ACS; part of the U.S. Army NATO Support Activity or Subpact) at 32-2-717-9783

I. CHOOSING A SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD

Unlike many overseas posts, Brussels has a wide range of educational choices. The basic choices are:

- a) An American-based education similar to what you might find at a public school in the United States (Brussels American School, a Department of Defense school).
- b) Private schools that follow the American or British curricula (e.g. British School of Brussels, International School of Brussels, St. John's International School).
- c) Private international schools that offer specific teaching approaches (e.g. International Christian Academy, Waterloo Montessori School).
- d) Public Belgian education (State or Parochial -Jewish, Catholic, etc.)
- e) Private Belgian institutions with special approaches and/or programs (e.g. Le Verseau, École Hamaide).
- f) A private European school that teaches in English with a strong program in French (European School).
- g) Private schools that teach entirely in a foreign language (e.g. Lycée Français and the German School).
- h) Boarding school in the U.S., U.K. or elsewhere.

Students of USG civilian employees are enrolled in a wide variety of schools. The Brussels American School (BAS), St. John's and the International School of Brussels (ISB) are the main institutions used (virtually all DOD students use BAS). There are also students enrolled at the British School, the Brussels English Primary School, in French language schools, and in the Christian Academy.

Your choice of school will be governed by academic, financial, cultural, linguistic and other considerations, including the location of your housing relative to the schools and to school bus transportation. The following guidelines were drawn up to help parents clarify their priorities and prepare them for the task of visiting and choosing a school.

1. The recommendations of other families can be extremely valuable in helping parents determine which school might be best for their child. Do not hesitate to query the schools to ascertain whether they have programs appropriate to your child's particular interests or needs.
2. Parents should call or write to the schools that interest them and request information. Schools can send brochures and names of parent or student contacts as well as provide a wealth of detailed information. Visiting a school—preferably while in session—and having an interview with the principal or teacher is also recommended. For more general information, parents can contact the Community Liaison Office or the Army Community Services Office, which is especially helpful in guiding parents to local Belgian schools.

3. Does your child need remedial help for learning or behavior problems? Some schools have full-time or part-time psychologists and therapists. This guide includes a list (Section V-B.) of resources available in the Brussels area. If your child has a difficulty (whether or not it has been diagnosed), do not hesitate to ask whether the school has appropriate resources. You should provide the school with full details of your case, including any reports of diagnosis or evaluation that may have been completed to facilitate the school's admission decision. This is especially important in the case of physical difficulties, since many schools in Belgium are ill-equipped to handle a physically handicapped child.
4. Government agencies follow different regulations concerning screening procedures for children with special needs. Employees of the foreign affairs agencies (State, Commerce, Agriculture, AID) should contact the Community Liaison Office or the Financial Management Center at the Embassy for information on allowances. Employees from other agencies should consult their own regulations.
5. Bring with you: academic records, reports, test results, text books (if possible) and/or some examples (typical ones) of your child's previous school work. A teacher can quickly ascertain a child's level by reviewing recent work. Similarly, you can compare textbooks to be used in your child's class with those he/she has been using. A signed and authenticated academic record is essential for high school students entering a Belgian school.
6. Are there any prerequisites which your child needs to take in order to enroll in certain subjects? If so, does the school offer the needed classes? Are you prepared to hire a tutor to help your child with a foreign language?
7. How much do you value parental participation in the activities of a school? Check on the school's attitude toward such participation.
8. If you decide to send your child to a school for which there will be out-of-pocket expenses, estimate all costs, including field trips. The extras can add up considerably.
9. If you decide not to send all of your children to the same school, check each school's calendar and daily hours carefully so that you are prepared for different holiday times, etc. Ask about bus routes and/or carpools.
10. The location of the school may be extremely important to you and your child. If the school is a long distance from your home, it's a good idea to learn about the length of the bus ride, the availability of carpools, transportation from after-school activities and whether any children in your neighborhood attend the school.
11. Many schools now accept applications by fax.
12. If you are living in the Washington, D.C. area and still in the planning stages of a move to Brussels, the Department of State has several resources: the Family Liaison Office's Educational Counselor (M/DGP/FLO), the Overseas Briefing Center (NFATC/OBC) and the Office of Overseas Schools (A/OPR/OS). These offices all have a fairly wide range of up-to-date school brochures as well as additional educational information.

II. ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>COMMUNE</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
<u>MAJOR AMERICAN/INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS</u>			
Brussels American School (BAS)	Sterrebeek	(02) 717-9552 fax 782-0230	7
St. John's International School	Waterloo	(02) 352-0610 fax 352-0620	9
The International School of Brussels (ISB)	Watermael-Boitsfort	(02) 661-4211 fax 661-4200	12
<u>BRITISH SCHOOLS</u>			
The British School of Brussels	Tervuren	(02) 766-0430 fax 767-8070	16
The British Primary School	Vossem	(02) 767-3098 fax 767-0351	18
The British Junior Academy	Etterbeek	(02) 732-5376 fax 732-5376	19
The British International School of Brussels	Brussels	(02) 736-8981	20
<u>OTHER SCHOOLS</u>			
The Brussels English Primary School (BEPS1)	Brussels	(02) 648-4311 fax 687-2968	21
The Brussels English Primary School (BEPS2)	Limal	(010) 417-227	21
The Brussels English Primary School	Waterloo	(02) 358-5606	22
The European School I	Uccle	(02) 373-8611	23
The European School II	Woluwe-St. Lambert	(02) 774-2211	23
The Antwerp International School	Antwerp	(03) 543-9300 fax 541-8201	24
The International Montessori School	Tervuren	(02) 767-6360	25

The European Montessori School	Waterloo	(02) 354-0033 fax 354-5141	26
The Int'l Montessori	Sterrebeek	(02) 767-6360	27
The Int'l Montessori	Wezembeek-Oppem	(02) 782-1236	28
The Children's Academy	Waterloo	(02) 351-4652	29
Children's House Montessori School	Brussels	(02) 365-6184	29
Montessori House Belgium	Braine l'Alleud	(02) 385-1503	29
AC Montessori Kids AC Montessori Nido	Ohain-Lasne	(02) 633-6652	30
Lycee Francais Jean Monnet-Bruxelles	Brussels	(02) 374-5878	31

BRUSSELS AMERICAN SCHOOL

12, John F. Kennedylaan
1933 Sterrebeek
Tel.: (02) 717-9552
Fax: (02) 782-0230
E-mail: principal_brussels_ehs@eu.odedodea.edu
Website: www.brussels.army.mil
Principal: Ms. Berry

Enrollment: 300 (2003)

School Ages: 5-18 years
Elementary School: Grades K-5 (Kindergarten is full day)
Middle School: Grades 6-8
High School: Grades 9-12

The Brussels American School (BAS) was opened in 1967 and is part of the Department of Defense Departments Schools (DODDS) system. The school is primarily for children of Department of Defense employees. Children of American employees of civilian USG agencies may also attend on a space-available basis. Children of officials working at NATO and at the embassies of NATO and Partners for Peace countries are allowed. Currently there are students from 20 different countries at BAS.

The school is located in the Flemish commune of Sterrebeek, about five miles to the east of the center of Brussels. The area is primarily residential, with rolling farm fields surrounding much of the school. The campus is spacious and well landscaped. The school is co-located with the U.S. Army NATO Health and Dental Clinics.

BAS consists of several buildings connected by covered walkways. The elementary school has its own classrooms, playground, well-stocked library and special learning facilities. The secondary school is in a separate building, with its own playing fields, special learning facilities and labs for science, computer, home economics and business courses.

The administration building and the gymnasium are the other two major structures. There is also a separate art room as well as a weight room and racquetball courts that are used for after-school activities. The elementary school has two imaginative playgrounds, one of which is among the best in Brussels. The cafeteria is located in a big multi-purpose room where students eat bag lunches or reasonably priced hot school lunches. This room also has a large stage for school programs and dances.

School property covers 17 acres and includes football and softball/soccer fields as well as tennis courts and a running track. Classrooms are bright and well equipped, many of them bursting with artwork created by the children. Lockers line the hallways. In the elementary school, there is one teacher per grade level. The school offers a Talented and Gifted program that begins as early as Grade 1. French lessons begin in kindergarten, with children learning simple songs and stories. Starting in Grade 1, students learn French daily in their "Host Nation" classes.

Throughout the elementary years, BAS stresses reading, writing and math fundamentals, primarily using U.S. textbooks. Because of the small class size, teachers can be flexible in allowing children to progress at their own pace. Standardized testing takes place in appropriate grades. Music, art and P.E. are part of the curriculum. There is a science fair and occasional field trips to local sites as well as other academic activities such as spelling bees. The library is full of up-to-date books and materials.

In secondary school, students have seven periods in the school day. DODDS requirements for graduation include the following subjects: English, social studies, math, science, P.E., career education, aesthetics (such as art or drama), health and computer science. In high school, French and Spanish are offered.

Among the academic activities: Model NATO, Model United Nations, Model Senate, Brain Bowl, Math Counts and Odyssey of the Mind. Classes often have as few as nine students in them. There are regular field trips to local sites of interest. More extensive field trips may be offered, including visits to the Ardennes and the Belgian coast. In the secondary school there are two groups that are active in music festivals throughout Europe.

In high school, students can choose from several Advanced Placement (AP) courses (see Section V-C. for more information on the AP program). Students can also independently study other AP courses.

Standardized pre-college testing is offered as well as pre-SAT preparation courses. There is a full-time guidance counselor who helps with college placement and provides day-to-day counseling for all ages.

All teachers are U.S.-accredited. Throughout the school year, teachers have regular in-service training courses. For those students with specific learning needs, BAS provides a reading specialist, and a speech therapist. Parents are asked to discuss specific learning needs with the school prior to enrollment.

BAS has an extremely supportive Parent-Teacher-Student-Organization (PTSO) that is involved in many aspects of school life, from organizing parent volunteers to helping plan school dances. In addition, the Booster Club is very active in supporting athletic activities.

Among the athletic activities offered are football, tennis, wrestling, volleyball, basketball, soccer, track and field and cheerleading. Students compete with other local international schools in Brussels as well as DODDS schools throughout Europe. The Brussels Sports Association, a private sports group primarily for expatriate children, uses BAS sports fields as well.

The school day runs from 8:25 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Kindergarten is a full day program. Bus service is available within a prescribed geographic area. In addition, there are activity buses that take students home later in the day. The school calendar differs considerably from that of international and Belgian schools. There is no summer program.

FEES: BAS does not charge fees to children of Department of Defense employees. The educational allowance for employees of civilian agencies covers the entire cost of BAS, including busing.

ST. JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

146, Drève Richelle
1410 Waterloo
Tel.: (02) 352-0610
Fax: (02) 352-0620 (general)
(02)352-0630 (admissions)
E-mail: Admissions@stjohns.be

Enrollment: 934 (2004)

Website: www.stjohns.be

Director: Dr. Joseph Doenges

School Ages: 3-18 years

- * Pre-K: 3-4 years (half-day and full-day)
- * Elementary School: grades K-5
- * Middle School: grades 6-8
- * High School: grades 9-12

Newly negotiated: Deferred payment of registration fees. Tri-Mission families no longer need to pay the registration fee up front. St. John's will collect the fee from post directly. For more information contact the CLO office (02 508-2227).

St. John's provides a quality education, which is inspired by Christian values, while respecting other religious traditions. Within a caring environment, students are cherished as individuals, encouraged to reach full potential, prepared to think globally with a commitment to justice, and challenged to act responsibly.

Located in the residential suburb and famous historical site of Waterloo, St. John's is about 20-40 minutes south of the center of Brussels (depending on traffic). The school has some 60 nationalities. The student body is 31 percent American. The school is adjacent to one of the main streets in Waterloo – a community with many expatriates (20% of the population). A suburban bus line and rail line connect Waterloo with Brussels.

St. John's is made up of several different buildings on a single campus. Because physical expansion is difficult, the school has bought (and plans to continue buying) houses or buildings behind the school property. The elementary, middle and high schools are linked in one main building. The kindergarten and pre-kindergarten are in a separate facility with two playgrounds, their own library, art room, music room and multi-purpose hall. The middle and high school are in sections that were added to the main building. There are a regulation size baseball / soccer field and four playgrounds. A new science wing, cafeteria and sports arena were opened in 2003. An entire building is devoted to the arts programs: painting/drawing, ceramics, photography and sculpture. The arts gallery, within the arts building, is used for exhibitions by students and professional artists. A Performing Arts Center is currently under construction and due to open in 2005. St. John's encourages participation in all aspects of school life and seeks to develop a sense of world citizenship and an active appreciation of the host country. Interaction with the Waterloo community is frequent. Community service projects are numerous throughout the school. St. John's offers an American course of studies which includes Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The curriculum also offers the International Baccalaureate (IB). Special language instruction is available to all students for whom English is an additional language. The school has a large Support Service department, which includes specialists in English as an Additional Language (EAL), physical and occupational therapy, and learning disabilities. For more information on these services, contact the school directly.

There is an extremely active PTA involved in all aspects of school life, from volunteering in the classroom to a parents' support network. An active Booster Club supports athletic activities and an active Arts Support Group sponsors the development of the arts.

School buses run to many parts of Brussels. Pre-schoolers may ride the bus with an older sibling. A hot lunch program is available from kindergarten through grade 5, although children may bring a packed lunch. Middle and high school may choose from a menu.

Because St. John's has so many options, this guide will describe each school separately.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN (Timbertops)

The pre-kindergarten program is located in a separate building across the street that runs behind St. John's. The outdoor play area is large and grassy.

Children may come to the program five mornings only a week, four afternoons a week, or four and a half days a week (Wednesday is a half-day for all students). The full-day program is available to all three and four year olds; however, children must be toilet-trained to enter the program.

Classes run from 8:35 – 11:45 a.m. or 8:35 – 3:20 p.m., except on Wednesday. The school uses Montessori materials as well as a large variety of other toys, books and manipulatives. Early academic programs are offered as readiness develops. Classrooms are bright and attractive. Children have circle time, story time, indoor and outdoor play. The curriculum includes music, art, science, library, computer, pre-reading and pre-math skills, and French.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten at St. John's is a full-day program, except on Wednesday, which is a half-day. At this level children study a wide variety of units of inquiry that continues throughout the elementary years: English, math, French, social studies, art, music, computer, P.E., religion and library. Class size varies from 20 – 24 students. Swimming lessons are included in the physical education program.

The primary section (grades 1 and 2) allows children to progress at their own rate but is heterogeneously grouped. The upper section (grades 3, 4, and 5) form one unit in separate buildings and with separate play areas.

St. John's gives standardized achievement tests as well as issuing progress reports. The school offers various field trips. Children may take private music lessons within or after school hours. They may also participate in choir, music ensemble, recorder club, art, drama, chess club and Irish dancing. French is offered every day. Ballet classes are offered at an additional fee.

Other after-school activities include Boy and Girl Scout troop meetings, gymnastics, swim team and intramural sports. Uniforms are required for grades 1 – 5 and may be purchased from a store in downtown Waterloo.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Though connected physically to the high school, the St. John's middle school is a world unto itself, with its own science labs, classrooms and lockers.

In grades 6 – 8, the core academic subjects are taught by an interdisciplinary team. These subjects include math, English, science, history, French (six levels), religion, ICT, P.E., and art, music or drama. Eighth graders may elect to study Spanish or German, which will advance them in their high school studies. Class size is approximately 24 students. Among the music activities offered are an ensemble and choir. Interscholastic sports include soccer, basketball, volleyball, cross country, track and swimming. After-school activities include dance, school newspaper and student council. St. John's actively competes academically and athletically with other international schools in Brussels and throughout Europe.

Field trips include a ski trip to Switzerland in grade 6 and "Outward Bound" style excursion in grades 7 and 8.

HIGH SCHOOL

St. John's offers a rigorous high school program. In order to graduate, a student must complete studies in the following subjects: English, math, social studies, one foreign language, science, P.E./health, sports, art, religion and various electives.

In addition there is a two year International Baccalaureate (IB) program and Advanced Placement (AP) courses (see Section V-C for further information on these types of courses). Advanced Placement courses in U.S. History and Art History are taught separately from the IB courses. The other 12 AP subjects offered are taught in conjunction with IB classes, and supplementary instruction is given if necessary. The total number of separate AP and combined AP/IB courses may vary slightly from year to year.

St. John's offers the standard pre-college exams for this age group, including the PSAT and the SAT. The SAT exam is actually administered at the International School of Brussels. A large variety of extra-curricular activities and sports are offered. Among them are Ecology Club, dance, Honor Choir, French theater trips, Model United Nations, Spanish Club and the yearbook. Counseling is available at all levels in the school. The sports program is widespread and includes volleyball, soccer, cross country, basketball, swimming, track and field, golf, tennis, baseball and softball. St. John's teams compete in the International Schools Sports Tournament (ISST), a level of play which involves travel throughout Europe.

St. John's often has a waiting list, so parents are advised to apply as early as possible.

FEES: For information about fees and financial aid, please contact the school directly.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BRUSSELS

19, Kattenberg
(Watermael-Boitsfort)
1170 Brussels

Tel: (02) 661-4211

Fax: (02) 661-4200

Admissions Office fax: (02)661-4213

E-mail: admissions@isb.be

Director: Kevin Bartlett

Enrollment: 1475 (2003)

website: www.isb.be

School ages: 3-18 years

- * Nursery School: 3-4 years (half-day and full-day)
- * Elementary School: grades K-6 (Kindergarten is full-day)
- * Middle School: grades 7-9
- * High School: grades 10-12

Newly negotiated: Deferred payment of registration fees. Tri-Mission families no longer have to pay the registration fee up front. ISB will collect the fee from post directly. For more information contact the CLO office (02 508-2227).

Established in 1951, The International School of Brussels (ISB) is the oldest and largest international school in Brussels. It offers an international curriculum to students from nursery school through high school. The campus stands on 40 acres of rolling woodland in the French-speaking commune of Watermael-Boitsfort, a few kilometers southeast of the city center at the end of a Brussels city bus and tram line that connects the school with the central part of Brussels.

Currently ISB is a community of approximately 66 nationalities, 31 percent of the student body is American. When visiting the school, the diversity of the student body is immediately evident on the playground and throughout the hallways. As ISB notes in its prospectus, "The makeup of our school and its location not only enable us to offer a demanding intellectual experience but also to provide our students with a truly global perspective." The school fosters this diversity in a variety of ways such as the annual International Festival, international coffee exchanges and volunteer activities by parents of all nationalities.

The school is divided into four divisions, each with its own Head and specialist staff, all of whom report to the Director of ISB. He has day to day management responsibility, reporting to the Board who are responsible for the long range planning and financial security of the school.

The four divisions are housed in four purpose-built buildings on the 40-acre campus. The Early Childhood Centre is adjacent to the Elementary School and they share a large library and cafeteria. Similarly, the Middle and High School are next door to each other and share a second large library and cafeteria. Students in all four divisions regularly use the two gymnasiums, the theatre, the tennis bubble and the extensive sports fields and woodland areas. The original 19th century château houses the administrative staff and is where the Director is based.

Each division offers learning support for children with learning disabilities and there is a Special Education programme for students from the age of 4 to 18 with a mental disability. Before students with learning disabilities can be admitted it is necessary for the school to review all the available documentation, to ensure that a satisfactory programme can be offered. The campus is accessible to people who use wheelchairs. Two nurses are on duty throughout the school day and run the health office, situated in the château.

Because ISB has so many options, this guide will describe each school separately:

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE – NURSERY THROUGH SECOND GRADE

The nursery-through-second-grade programs are co-located in an early childhood education building, connected to the elementary school building. Three-year-olds can attend either half-day or full-day. Half-day pupils may add two afternoons per week to their program later in the school year. Pre-kindergarten is for four-year-olds. It is either a full day (except for Wednesday afternoons) or a half day program.

The maximum number of children in the nursery class is 18, in pre-kindergarten and in kindergarten it is 20. Each class has a teacher and a teacher's assistant. In grades 1 and 2 the maximum is 21, with each grade level sharing a teacher's assistant. There is a reading area with plenty of books. The class usually has many different nationalities, and children are encouraged to play and learn together.

There are three periods of independent activity as well as whole class activities such as music and story time. Small group activities, include language, math and science. For outdoor play, there is a large playing area with a variety of play equipment.

Hot lunch is available for kindergarten, first and second graders, or children may bring a bag lunch.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – THIRD THROUGH SIXTH GRADES

Classes for grades three through six are held in the elementary school building, connected to the early childhood building. Reading, math, science, and social studies are part of the curriculum and take into account different learning abilities at this age. Music, P.E., art and computer are offered.

In grades one through six, individualized programs in the basic subjects – language arts, reading, math, and French – enable children to progress at their own level and pace. If a child is lagging in an area, he/she may be offered help by a resource teacher. Special language instruction is available to all students for whom English is a second language.

French is taught by specialists who have anywhere from 2-6 different ability groups per grade level. Among the activities that increase the children's knowledge of French is an after-school French club and cultural outings that tie in with French instruction.

ISB gives standardized U.S. aptitude and achievement tests although these will be replaced by a testing system based on international norms in school year 2005-06. There is a full-time psychologist/guidance counselor to diagnose learning disabilities. The school has a Special Education programme on the first floor of the elementary school – a large, sunny classroom for seriously learning-impaired children who need individual attention from qualified teachers.

All grades take field trips, with grades three through six offered an extended study trip to such places as Florence or Trier in Germany. The elementary school has its own computer room as well as computers within the classroom. The 18,000 volume library is spacious and well stocked. All children take music lessons from a specialist and perform in various musical programs throughout the year. In addition, they may take private music lessons at school for a fee. The art classes are taught by a specialist in the well-supplied art studio.

Children take P.E. three times a week – either in the gym, the tennis bubble, or the fields. These include sports such as soccer, basketball, and gymnastics.

Elementary school classrooms are bright and cheerful, with decorated lockers outside them. Hot lunch is available, or students may bring a bag lunch.

After-school activities are numerous and include drama, elementary newspaper, a French activity group, scout meetings, and tennis lessons.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

ISB built a new Middle School in 1999, adjacent to and linked with the High School. Both buildings share a 36,000 volume library and a large cafeteria serving a variety of hot and cold food. There are five science laboratories, extensive outside terracing and a dedicated computer laboratory. This school for grades 7-9 has a solid academic reputation and a lively and creative approach to education. Classrooms are bright and attractive, with lockers outside for each student.

The school day has eight periods, with students changing teachers depending on the subject. The basic courses are English, social studies, math, French, science and P.E. Each classroom has a maximum of 20 students, but class size is often smaller.

In 9th grade, students have the choice of French and/or Spanish. There are seven levels of French at each grade level, from beginning to fluent. Fluent involves a study of French culture and literature as well as language. Advanced French students may also take social studies and science in French.

Electives include art, band, choir, journalism, computer studies, business studies, website design, digital video production and editing and theatre. Depending on their grade, students must take at least one elective per semester, and for grades 7 and 8, at least one of the electives chosen per year must come from the arts.

Like the Elementary School, the Middle School offers a variety of courses for non-native English speakers. Field trips are numerous and closely follow specific class topics. They include visits to places such as Holland, Cologne and Ypres. A Model United Nations session is part of the social studies curriculum.

Health education is a requirement in all grades, with different subjects based on the grade level. All 9th grade students must participate in a health class that includes discussions on sexuality and drug and alcohol use. There are specialists in counseling, health, and learning disabilities.

Among the extracurricular activities are French Club, drama, choir, band and strings as well as a large variety of sports. These include volleyball, cross-country, field hockey, tennis and American football.

HIGH SCHOOL

The basic academic program in high school involves an individual choice: a basic college preparatory course, the two-year International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program, and a mixture of basic college prep courses with IB or Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The school offers seven AP courses as well as the option to take the IB program in a language other than English. (See section V-C for further information of these types of courses.)

The AP courses offered are American History, Biology, Calculus, English, European History, French V, Statistics/Pre-Calculus.

The following courses are not AP courses, nor are they designed to prepare students for the AP examination. However, students may choose to take the associated examination on completion of the course:

IB Chemistry II	AP Chemistry
French IV or IV Advanced	AP French Language
Spanish IV	AP Spanish Language
IB Higher Mathematics I	AP Calculus AB

French is offered at many different levels, from beginner through advanced literature. Spanish is also available. There are special programs for ESL students. Counseling is offered at all levels, with special emphasis on college placement for interested students.

There is a wide range of clubs and activities, including Student Council, computer club and language clubs. Music and drama activities including jazz ensemble, choir and honor orchestra. ISB is actively involved in music festivals throughout Europe.

The high school athletic program includes sports such as American Football, rugby, field hockey, basketball, baseball, cross-country and soccer. ISB teams compete against BAS and other DODDS schools in Europe as well as in local and international meets.

ISB has an extensive bus network throughout the Brussels area. There are no buses available for students who stay for after-school activities. High school students may purchase a hot lunch or buy from an a la carte menu.

The Family Association is extremely active at ISB and is involved in many diverse activities. There are summer school workshops and programs for all ages as well as a variety of adult education classes including the possibility of studying for an MA in Education.

As mentioned previously, the school has a special education department that accepts children with specific disabilities whose needs cannot be met with a mainstream classroom. Parents should discuss their children's needs with the school prior to enrollment.

Fees: For the most current information about fees, please contact the school directly or consult their website, www.isb.be

THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF BRUSSELS

19, Leuvensesteenweg
3080 Tervuren
Tel.: (02) 766-0430
Fax: (02) 767-8070
E-Mail: admissions@britishschool.be
Principal: Roland S. Chant, MA

Enrollment: 1140 (2003)

Website: www.britishschool.be

School Ages: 3-18+ years

- * Infant Section: Kindergarten to Year 2
- * Junior Section: Years 3 to 6
- * Senior Section: Years 7 to 13

The British School has a beautiful campus, surrounded by forests and lakes, in the commune of Tervuren, 20 minutes from the center of Brussels. The school seeks excellence in all areas of educational experience. Its aim is to provide a British-style education within a European context, taking advantage of the many opportunities for visits, school journeys and fieldwork throughout the continent.

The school caters to over 1140 students between the ages of 3 and 18+. Approximately 75% are British, but, in total, over 60 nationalities are represented.

The school is extremely well equipped. Each section (Infant, Junior and Senior) has its own library, hall and gymnasium. There is a specialized Early Years Unit for the 3 and 4 year olds, and a prestigious new science and math center for secondary-level students was opened in January 1996.

Academic standards are high throughout the school. Teaching follows the British National Curriculum but with greater emphasis on modern languages and the creative arts. Close contacts have been developed with schools within the local community. Most students continue on to universities and colleges throughout the world and all receive individual guidance from a well-resourced Career Center. There is also an alternate vocational route to higher education through the BTEC National Diploma in Business and Finance.

The pastoral program is equally important. BSB takes pride in the relaxed and informal relationships between its staff and students, which are based on courtesy, self-discipline and mutual respect. The form tutors have a pivotal role to play and closely monitor students' progress.

For students who require additional help, there are the services of a specialist Learning Support Department, Educational Psychologist and School Counselor.

Music and drama have a special place in the life of the school. There is a magnificent theater that seats 240 and is used extensively, not only by students and parents, but also by the local community. Sports also have a special place. In addition to the three gymnasiums, there are two squash courts and four outdoor tennis courts, together with a sports hall and large playing fields. All are available for use after school hours through the Sports Centre. Gymnastics for girls, swimming, hockey and tennis for all, together with rugby and football for boys are especially popular.

The British School is a community school and is as welcoming to adults as it is to children. Adult education classes, for example, are offered to parents during the autumn and spring terms,

and holiday courses are arranged for children at Easter and in the summer. The social center contains a servery with bar.

A Parents' Office within the school provides information and support to families. Activities such as cubs, brownies, scouts, guides, ballet and swimming are available.

There is a school bus service, and a host family scheme operates for those who live too far for daily travel.

The British School of Brussels takes pride in the fact that its students respond with enthusiasm to a caring and lively environment. It is against this background that they are encouraged to develop their own special talents and abilities and to achieve a sense of fulfillment.

FEES: For full information, please contact the school directly.

THE BRITISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stationstraat 3
3080 Vossem (Tervuren)
Tel.: (02) 767-3098
Fax: (02) 767-0351
E-Mail: info@britishprimary.com
Headmistress: Dorothy Guy, MBE

Enrollment: 150 (2004)

Website: www.britishprimary.com

School Ages: 3-11 years

British Primary specialises in providing first class education and social development for boys and girls from 3 to 11 years. Eighty percent of our pupils come from English-speaking families, but many Nationalities are represented and all are welcome. We realise that parents do not have any choice in the timing of their relocation and we welcome children in school at any stage in the school year, not only at the start of a term. The emphasis at British Primary is on providing *'The Best Possible Start'* for children within an environment they can call a second home, so important for young children settling into a new country or going to school for the first time. We have deliberately remained a small school where each child can play a prominent role and develop confidence to take him or her on into the next stage of education. We have small class sizes, with one adult to eight children in Nursery and a maximum ratio of twenty children to each class teacher in Primary. The school is housed in three buildings in Stationsstraat. No. 6 is dedicated to our Foundation Stage (Nursery & Reception), No. 3 to Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and No 1 to Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6).

Foundation

Stage

Nursery

From the term in which a child becomes 3

Reception

Aged 4 + by September 1st

Primary

Aged 5+ (Year 1) until aged 10+ (Year 6)
by 1st September

All buildings have outdoor areas, with age-appropriate play equipment on all-weather safety surfaces. The garden outside No's 1 & 3 includes a pond in support of the science curriculum. We have French and music rooms, two libraries, computers with Internet connection (children use them from Nursery upwards) and kitchen facilities for cookery lessons. We follow the UK based "Early Learning Goals" for Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum for England and Wales for Primary Years (Key Stages 1 & 2). The school is staffed with fully qualified UK teachers and has specialist French, music and library teachers as well as a school nurse and Nursery assistants. Our approach makes the emotional well being of each child as important to us as high academic standards. We also have a specialist EAL (English as an Additional Language) teacher available for those who require more intensive language teaching.

British Primary has a door- to - door bus service running from many areas South East of Brussels. This uses mini buses fitted with seat belts, which the children must wear. The drivers speak two languages – English and either French or Flemish. This, along with mobile phones in each bus, ensures the safety of all children at all times. The routes for the buses are altered depending upon addresses of children.

There is a PTA and parents are active in the school helping with a variety of events e.g. Easter egg hunt, Valentine disco. A range of after school activities include: football, ballet, disco dance & music club.

For current details please contact the school directly Tel: + 32 2767 6483, info@britishprimary.be or visit the website on www.britishprimary.com

THE BRITISH JUNIOR ACADEMY OF BRUSSELS

83, Boulevard Saint-Michel

1040 Brussels

Tel.: (02) 732-5376

Fax: (02) 732-5376

E-Mail: bjabrussels@yahoo.com

Website: www.bjab.org

Head: Diane Perry

The British Junior Academy of Brussels (BJAB) is a primary school for international children from 3-11 years. The school's academic programme follows the core features of the British National Curriculum. In addition to the strong academic subjects, music, drama, ICT, swimming and physical education, the school has a successful and well-designed French programme. By developing work in subjects such as food + technology and an imaginative cross-curricular approach to teaching the arts, our children experience an all-inclusive curriculum. Academic, sporting and practical experiences with after- school activities ensure that pupils gain keen conceptual understanding in their studies, affording them an excellent foundation where they are encouraged to become confident learners in a caring environment. Member of COBISEC and ECIS.

BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BRUSSELS

163 ave Emile Max
1030 Brussels

Tel 32 2 736 8981

Fax: 32 2 736 8983

e-mail: schooloffice@bisb.org

Headteacher: Stephen Prescott MA, B.Eng. PGCE

Enrolment: 75 (2003)

Website www.bisb.org

School Ages 2½ - 11 years

* Nursery: 2½ - 4 years

* Infant: 4-7 years

* Junior: 7-11 years

The British International School of Brussels, established in 2000, enables children to benefit from an enriching and challenging educational programme based on the British National Curriculum. Mutual respect and tolerance are strong themes of the high-quality educational provision for English speaking children aged 2½ to 11.

The school's magnificent two-storey villa provides a very pleasant working environment for both staff and children, and includes attractive classrooms, library, music room and extensive outside playground, as well as a networked computer suite with Internet connections. All of the full-time staff have British recognised qualifications with an overall child / teacher ratio of 10:1. The school is very well located with excellent public transport links, being the closest international school to the American Embassy. It is approximately 3 km east of the city centre, 2km from NATO and 1½ km from the European Commission area around Schuman,.

The small class sizes (current average is less than 14) are a very significant attraction to parents and as the school was founded by parents there is a thriving sense of community. This complements the warm, friendly atmosphere for which the school has rapidly become renowned. The school has about 70 children representing over 25 different nationalities. Over 50% of the children are British, the second commonest nationally being Australian followed by American, Japanese, Danish and Italian. 80 % of the children are first language English and we offer a carefully structured programme for children who are not. French is introduced at Nursery level, with formal lessons starting in the Reception class, and a variety of extra-curricular activities is offered.

The academic year has approximately 180 school days divided into three terms between early September and early July. The school day starts at 9:00 a.m. and extends until 3:25 although many of the younger children finish at 12:15. To assist working parents we offer a Garderie provision until 6:00 each day. Admission is possible at any time of the school year and requires reports from previous schools and an interview. Each application is carefully considered so that we ensure that entrants can benefit from the educational program offered.

THE BRUSSELS ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL (BEPS 1)

23, Avenue Franklin Roosevelt
1050 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 648-4311
Fax: (02) 687-2968
E-mail: info@beps.com
Director: Julia Beverly
Headmaster: Neil Tomalin

Enrollment: 225 (2003)

Website: www.beps.com

School Ages: 2½-12 years

* Pre-school: 2½-4½ years (half-day and full-day)

* Primary: 4½-12 years

BEPS - Brussels (Brussels English Primary School) founded in 1972, is an international school for 2½ - to 11-year-olds. The 240 pupils come from 40 countries, and French is taught from class 1 (age 4). Classes are small, allowing for individual attention. An IB World School offering the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IBPYP), the school offers excellent computer facilities, swimming classes , and woodwork for older children. A separate Bears Cottage is for pre-school children. The grounds have extensive, attractive play areas. Extra tuition in music and English as a foreign language. English Common Entrance exam preparation available upon request. Door-to-door bus service available. Regular member of the European Council of International Schools (ECIS), Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Council of English-Speaking Schools in the Benelux (CESSIB). 23 Avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 1050 Brussels, tel: 02.648.43.11 fax: 02.687.29.68 Head of School : Neil Tomalin. Director of Educational Programmes: Julia Beverley. Annual fees from Euro 6,850 - 15,150.

THE BRUSSELS ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL - LIMAL (BEPS 2)

13-15, Rue Leon Deladriere
1300 Limal

Tel.: (010) 041-7227

Fax: (02) 687-2968

E-mail: info@beps.com and limal@beps.com

Director: Charles Gellar

Headmistress: Henny de Waal

Enrollment: 85 (2001-02)

Website: www.beps.com

School Ages: 2½-11 years

* Pre-school: 2½-4½ years

* Primary: 4½-11 years

BEPS-Limal (Brussels English Primary School's second school), established in 1992, is an international school located in Limal (near Wavre). With an enrolment of 90 pupils, it offers the innovative International Primary Years Programme (IPC) for children aged 2½ to 11. Features include extensive grounds, woodland, gardens, pets, mini sports field, an activities centre theatre that seats 200, a museum and pony club. French is taught at all levels, including pre school. BEPS - Limal serves many families living in areas south east of Brussels including La Hulpe, Overijse, Hoeilaart, Lasne, Leuven and Ottignies. A door-to-door school bus service is available. 13 Rue Léon Deladrière, 1300 Limal, tel: 010.41.72.27 fax: 02.687.29.68, email: info@beps.com. Head of School: Henny de Waal. Annual fees: from 6,750 to 15,150.

THE BRUSSELS ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL - WATERLOO

280 Chaussee de Waterloo
1640 Rhode St Genèse
Tel.: (02) 358-5606
Fax: (02) 358-3132
E-mail: info@beps.com
Head: Jonathan Merrett

BEPS - Waterloo (Candidate Status IB World School) opened in September 1999, and shares the campus with World International School (WIS), to ensure high-quality education for 100 students, aged between 2½ and 16 years. The IBPYP at BEPS - Waterloo allows for a smooth transition into the middle years curriculum, which in turn, prepares students for the IB Diploma programme. The campus is very conveniently located south of Brussels, and enjoys the use of 5 buildings, a superb gymnastics and sports arena, playgrounds, and extensive green areas. Parking is available as is, a door-to-door bus service. Annual fees: from Euro 6,750 to 15,150.

THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL

Brussels I/Uccle
46, Avenue du Vert Chasseur
1180 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 373-8611
Fax: (02) 375-4716
Email: edhe@eursc.org
Head: Rien Jonkers

Enrollment: 2500 (2003)

Website: www.eeb1.org

Brussels II/Woluwe
75, Avenue Oscar Jespers
1200 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 774-2211
Fax: (02) 772-0530 (secondary) 774-2260 (primary)
Email: webmaster@ecb2.be
Head: Mr. Sfingo Poulos

Website: www.ecb2.be

School ages: 4-18 years
* Nursery (ages 4-5)
* Primary (ages 6-10)
* Secondary (ages 11-18)

* Currently, only accepting children from the European Commission.

THE ANTWERP INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (AIS)

180 Veltwijcklaan
2180 Ekeren
Antwerp, Belgium
Tel: (03) 543-9300
E-Mail: ais@ais-antwerp-be
K-12 Grades
Headmaster: Robert F. Schaecher

Enrollment: 637 (2003)

Fax: (03) 541-8201
Website: www.ais-antwerp.be

The Antwerp International School is a co-educational day school that was founded in 1967 to meet the international community's need for quality education in the English language. The school offers a program leading to either a US High School Accredited Diploma or the International Baccalaureate diploma that is universally recognized. It is a member of the European Council of International Schools, the Council of English-speaking School in Benelux, and the European Council of International Schools.

The School is situated on a seven-acre wooded estate. The campus includes a large converted mansion which houses the administration offices and the English as a Foreign Language program; a new building which accommodates Elementary and Secondary school classrooms, a library and computer centers; a complex which houses the main gym area, dressing rooms, three science laboratories, math classes and a cafeteria; a special area designed for Early Childhood and a Fine Arts Center which includes a theater, art and music rooms and a reception. Local swimming pools and sports fields are used for athletic activities. Boarding facilities are not available.

The school, located in the residential suburb of Ekeren, is ten kilometers north of Antwerp and is easily reached by car, train or bus. The school contracts with a private bus company to provide bus service on pre-determined routes.

Classes are in session from late August to mid-June. Daily class sessions run from 8:25 a.m. to 3:25 p.m. Extra-curricular activities follow the 3:25 p.m. dismissal and usually last until 5 p.m. There are numerous activities after school such as music, art, drama, and a program of athletic activities for both boys and girls, including basketball, volleyball, softball, soccer, tennis, track and swimming. The parents Organization offers additional programs for the younger students.

Parents are encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible since waiting lists develop at some grade levels.

Prospective students for grades 1-12 may be requested to take placement tests to determine their level of achievement and to assist in grade placement. For admission to Pre-School, the child must attain the age of 3 on or before December 31st of the school year. For admission to Kindergarten, the child must attain the age of 5 on or before December 31st of the school year.

It is advised that all records, recommendations and transcripts be hand-carried by the parents. A.I.S. will then send for official transcripts from the previous school.

Certified proof of age must accompany each application.

Limited special education facilities are available at A.I.S. Children with special needs may be accepted if it is agreed that educational progress is possible at A.I.S. The final decision is the prerogative of the Administration.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SCHOOL TERVUREN

1, Rotselaerlaan
3080 Tervuren
Tel.: (02) 767-6360
Fax: (02) 767-6360

Email: Montessori-tervuren@online.be
Headmistress: Annie Hoekstra-de Roos

Enrollment: 100 (2004)

Website: international-montessori.org

School ages: 15 months to 15 years

The International Montessori School offers a bilingual English-French Montessori program for children between the ages of 1 1/2 and 15 years, grouped as:

Toddler Community: 15 months to 3 years
Children's House: 3 years to 6 years
Lower Primary: 6 years to 9 years
Upper Primary: 9 years to 12 years
Middle School: 12 years to 15 years

Located in two adjacent villas near the African Museum and in a beautiful restored old farmhouse in the center of Tervuren. The school has several bright spacious classrooms that are kept immaculate. Due to its size it offers a family atmosphere.

In the premises on the Bergestraat an all-day Montessori program is offered to children aged 15 months to 6 years old. Children can attend from 7.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. In the school in Tervuren After School Hours are available up to 5.15 p.m.

In a Montessori school each child works at his/her pace, according to individual development in a specially prepared environment. The classrooms are very well equipped with a full range of Montessori equipment.

The elementary curriculum also includes subjects in both English and French, mathematics presented using didactic pieces of equipment which lead the child from concrete to abstract, interrelated cultural subjects, piano, violin, computer education and physical education. Two teachers, one English-speaking and the other one French speaking, create a complete bilingual environment.

The Middle School program offers a dynamic environment with an urban and a farm setting. The children are exposed to the curriculum by their mentors and specialists sharing their expertise. At the farm children work and live in a micro-economy, it offers different aspects that help the adolescent in becoming a responsible and independent member of society.

The school offers a bus service and an address list of all families which facilitates car pooling.

FEES: For information about fees, please contact the school directly.

THE EUROPEAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

12, Avenue Beau Sejour
1410 Waterloo

Tel: (02) 354-0033

Fax: (02) 354-5141

E-Mail: europeanmon@skynet.be and info@europeanmontessorischool.com

Website: www.europeanmontessorischool.com

Head: Ms. Yvonne Vermerlen

Enrollment: 80 (2003)

Established in 1981, The European Montessori School is the first school to bring Montessori education to the greater Brussels area. E.M.S. offers a bilingual education to children ages 18 months to 12 years of age. In our pre-school, Montessori materials are introduced in English with a French assistant to provide support. Older children are taught in English. They receive highly specialized French lessons in small groups of 2-7 children. The European Montessori School is a caring school in the heart of an international community. Students are primarily from the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Scandinavia, and Belgium. The entire student population is represented by several different nationalities coming from every continent, all-learning together.

The school's academic curriculum follows the guidelines set forth by Maria Montessori. Unlike many schools, the Montessori method allows children of different ages to share the same classroom. Most class time is spent in individual or small group activities. Part of each day is also spent in a whole class activity such as music, art, story telling, and special projects. Each week the children also receive swimming, music, and gym lessons from a teaching specialist.

The Parent Teacher Association is involved in many school activities such as: fund raising, The Montessori Newsletter, tutoring, library, and group meetings. Homemade hot soup is available during the cold months.

Door to door bus service is available.

The European Montessori School welcomes visitors. Please call the office to make an appointment.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Mechelssesteenweg 79
1933 Sterrebeek
tel: 02-784-2784
fax: 02-784-2784

Enrollment: 45 (2004)

E-mail: montessori-sterrebeek@skynet.be

Website: www.international-montessori.org

Head of School: Odette Penneman - Headmistress: Annie Hoekstra – de Roos

School ages: 15 months to 6 years

The International Montessori Children's Centre offers a bilingual English-French Montessori program for children between the ages of 15 months and 15 years, grouped as:

Toddler Community: 15 months to 3 years

Children's House: 3 years to 6 years

Located in a beautiful villa close to Sterrebeek Centre, this child development center offers 2 beautiful environments with all objects and furniture scaled to the size of the children.

The Toddler Community is set up in such a way that children can practise in becoming independent. There is a small bathroom which aids the potty learning process, cubbies for changing, small cutlery used to mix the dough and make the bread, a very low sink in order to do the dishes. The aim behind these activities is that children can slowly integrate their body and mind. They can practise in thinking; "What do I need?, and Where can I find it".

Furthermore there are language materials, craft, activities for fine motor skills, music, and outdoor activities.

The Children's House caters to children aged 3-6. They are exposed to the very concrete materials that guide them from concrete understanding to abstract thought. They can do mathematics such as additions and subtractions with beautifully designed equipment. The program also includes learning to write and read in a multi sensorial way, manipulative equipment for the fine motor skills and activities of practical life which help children become aware of the needs of themselves, others and their environment.

The school has a nice green outdoor environment with a sandbox, swings, garden beds and equipment for gross motor development and gardening.

The school offers a bus service and an address list of all families which facilitates car pooling.

FEES: For information about fees, please contact the school directly.

THE INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI CENTRE

Molenweg 4
1970 Wezembeek-Oppem
tel: 02-782-1236
fax: 02-782-1236

Enrollment: 45 (2004)

E-mail: montessori-tervuren@online.be

Website: www.international-montessori.org

Head of School: Lidia Klimczak - Headmistress: Annie Hoekstra – de Roos

School ages: 15 months to 6 years

This International Montessori Centre offers a bilingual English-French Montessori program for children between the ages of 15 months and 15 years, grouped as:

Toddler Community: 15 months to 3 years

Children's House: 3 years to 6 years

Located in a beautifully renovated house on a quiet cul-de-sac. It offers very open and bright classrooms with a warm Nordic feel to it.

The Toddler Community has floor heating which makes it very cosy and warm. It offers a child-development program which caters to the needs of the very young. The brain develops from birth onwards and needs appropriate stimulation. This is what the program is based on. Children are exposed to 2 languages at all times. They have two adults, one speaking English and the other one speaking French. The children absorb these languages naturally and with ease. Furthermore they work with practical life activities which help them in becoming independent and integrate their personality. Beautiful wooden equipment aid the development of the fine motor skills and music, listening to stories, dance and relaxation help in the awareness of oneself and others.

The Children's House will start in September 2004 and offer an environment that stimulates the development of each aspect of personality. It is divided in four areas being language both verbal and written acquisition, mathematics with concrete materials, practical life and sensorial activities stimulating the development of all senses. Montessori education aims to help with the development of self esteem. A good feeling of self is the basis of doing well in life and in becoming a happy, harmonious personality.

The school also has a gym room with different equipment stimulation the gross motor development and the social development.

The school has a nice outdoor environment with a sandbox, swings, garden beds and equipment for gross motor development and gardening.

The school offers a bus service and an address list of all families which facilitates car pooling.

FEES: For information about fees, please contact the school directly.

THE CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

122, Dreve Richele

1410 Waterloo

Tel/Fax: (02) 351-4652

Email: childrensacademy@hotmail.com

Head: Nicole De Rycker

Enrollment: Max 30

website: www.childrens-academy.org

School ages: 2 ½ to 6

The Children's Academy is a small, bilingual Montessori school for children aged 2 ½ to 6, with excellent facilities and capacity for 30 pupils to attend full or part time.

CHILDREN'S HOUSE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

458B, Avenue Dolez

1180 Brussels

Tel: (02) 375-6184 or 375-1265

Email: catherine.vigreux@tiscali.be

Head: Catherine Vigreux-Johnson

School ages: 2 ½ to 5 ½-6

Children's House Montessori School welcomes 2 ½ to 5 ½-6 year olds in a pleasant green setting. Bilingual English/French Montessori education is offered in a multicultural family atmosphere. The school is organized to meet the needs at each development stage and to provide a warm and secure community environment.

MONTESSORI HOUSE BELGIUM

117, Rue Pegere

1420 Braine l'Alleud

Tel/fax: (02) 385-1503

Email: info@montessorihouse.net

Head: Sabah Siddigi

Website: www.montessorihouse.net

School ages: 2 to 8

Montessori House Belgium follows a modern Montessori program with a bilingual approach, the main language being English. There are three classes: Nursery (2 to 4 year olds), Primary One (4 to 6 year olds), and Primary Two (6 to 8 year olds). All staff are Montessori trained and the child/teacher ratio is approximately 8:1. In addition to daily French lessons, children follow music, gym and swimming lessons in French. Music appreciation, computer skills, field trips and performing arts are part of the curriculum. A bus service and an after school garderie service are also available.

AC. MONTESSORI KIDS

4, Route de Renipont

1380 OHAIN - LASNE

Tel. and fax 32 2 633.66.52

E-mail : info@acmontessorikids.com

Website: www.acmontessorikids.com

Principals : Laurence Randoux and Marc Ciepers

offers bilingual English/French education for children from 1 1/2 to 12 years of age. The school have four classrooms: one class for children aged 18 months to 3 years, two class for children aged from 3 to 6 years and one class for children aged from 6 to 12 years old.

Each class is directed by two or three teachers, one of who is English-speaking, the second is French-speaking (both teach consistently in their native language). The low teacher/student allows for individualized learning and enables each child to work at his own pace. Activities designed to help each child reach his/her fullest potential, promote the development of social skills, emotional growth and physical coordination. Weekly extra curricular activities include music, gym and swimming sessions. For the elementary level 6 to 9 the tuition fee also covers swimming lessons, individual piano lessons, an introduction to computers and to the visual arts. For the elementary level 9 to 12 the tuition fee also covers yoga lesson, theatre lesson, individual piano lessons, an introduction to computers and to the visual arts
The school also offers a bus service.

AC. MONTESSORI KIDS is housed in a large villa in rural Lasne. The classrooms are large, bright and open on to a vast garden / playground. As **AC. MONTESSORI KIDS** is approved by the Belgian childrens authority, O.N.E, school fees for children up to 3 years of age are tax-deductible.

AC. MONTESSORI KIDS is a private school and the tuition fees vary according to the programme selected. In case of mid-term enrolment, the fees will be prorated to cover the remaining months.

AC. MONTESSORI KIDS "NIDO"

41, Boulevard de la Cense

Tel. and fax 32 2 354 86 76

E-mail : info@acmontessorikids.com

Website: www.acmontessorikids.com

Principals : Laurence Randoux and Marc Ciepers

offers education for children from 2 month to 3 years of age. The crèche have 2 groups: one group for children aged 2month to 18 month " the non walkers" with maximum 15 children for three adults, one group for children aged 18 months to 3 years "the walkers" with maximum 18 children for three adults.

There are no special requirements for admission to the crèche. The low nursery nurse/children ratio allows for individualized learning, enabling each child to work at his own pace. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth and physical coordination, and are geared to help each child reach his/her full potential. The crèche housed in a large villa in rural Waterloo, offers large and bright rooms opening up to a vast garden/playground. Furthermore **AC. MONTESSORI KIDS "NIDO"** is approved by the Belgian youth authority O.N.E., which means that school fees for children up to 3 years are tax-deductible. **NIDO** is a private crèche and the tuition fees vary according to the programme selected.

LYCEE FRANCAIS JEAN MONNET-BRUXELLES

9, Avenue du Lycee Francais

1180 Brussels

Tel: (02) 374-5878

Fax: (02) 374-9843

Email: ljm-direction@wanadoo.be

Website: www.lyceefrancais-jmonnet.be

Head: Michel Lepretre

School ages: Kindergarten to Baccalaureate

Lycee Francais Jean Monnet is part of the French educational system and covers all grades from kindergarten through primary school to the Baccalaureate. There is an English-speaking section that prepares children for GCSE (University of London) in English language and literature. Its origins in Belgium go back to 1907, but today it is a modern, purpose-built school catering for students of over 50 nationalities and providing up-to-date facilities, active sports programs and theatre groups. An extensive school bus service is available.

III. ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL PRE-SCHOOLS IN BRUSSELS

NOTE: Children between 18 months and 2 1/2 can go to private or public Belgian nursery schools. Foreigners are charged fees at these schools. Belgium also has a large network of licensed child-minders who operate out of their own home (similar to home day-care in the United States) and who are allowed, by law, to take a maximum of three children into their home. For more information on child-care/nursery schools for very young children, please contact the CLO, the ACS Office, or the two Belgian offices responsible for supervising all paid care for children under age 7: L'Office de la Naissance et de L'Enfance (ONE), for the French speaking community, and Kind en Gezin, for the Flemish (Dutch) speaking community.

Choosing a pre-school in Brussels is somewhat similar to choosing a primary school in that French, Flemish (Dutch) and English language schools are available. The two international Montessori schools also offer bilingual education in French and English, even at the pre-school level.

Choices have improved considerably in the past few years for those who want an English language private play group/pre-school. However, some programs are extremely expensive, and other schools may be some distance away from your home.

Most schools take in children year-round if there is a vacancy. Many of the schools follow a trimester calendar (10 weeks in each session), but check the school calendar carefully to note holidays, etc. There is no universal calendar for any of the schools.

For those parents who are staunch supporters of the cooperative nursery school, Brussels is a disappointment. Some schools allow parental help in the classroom at times, but not on a formal basis. The closest one may come to a co-op is the Belgian *Farandoline* (see page 34), but even this is unlike the American system.

British expatriates run most of the private English language pre-schools. The programs are similar to American nursery school programs although some of the schools actively teach reading, writing and math skills to their four-year-old classes. British children usually are expected to be reading and writing by age 5, about a year before American children.

The terminology identifying pre-school classes is extremely confusing even if you are only talking about the English language schools. The best thing to do when inquiring is to refer to your child's age. In addition, be aware that some schools have extremely strict cut-off dates for admittance to a certain age group. For instance, your 2-year-old who turns 3 in late September will miss the cut-off for Kindergarten at the British School by a few days, but there are no exceptions made. Other schools may be quite flexible, however.

No matter where you live there will be a Belgian pre-school open to residents of the commune. Some will be within easy walking distance. The proximity of a local school may be a great convenience, especially when compared to the driving you might have to do in sending your child to a private English language pre-school. You will usually have the choice of a Catholic or State school. And some communes provide schools in both French and Flemish (Dutch).

Classes follow the standard primary school schedule although there is no obligation to send a child every day for the whole day. This flexibility can be a great advantage. Most Belgian pre-schools have no busing arrangements, though mini-buses are often used on school outings.

Some Belgian pre-schools may have less attractive facilities than what Americans might expect. Many have fairly large classes (20 to 24 children, one teacher) by American standards. *Pre-gardien/peutertuin* classes in some schools take in children 1 1/2-2 1/2 year old. Parents pay a fee for this service.

Check with the *maison communale* in your area, or contact the Army Community Service office to find out which Belgian schools have pre-schools or *garderie* programs for working parents. The Jardin d'Enfants/Bewaarschool programs are for children from 2 1/2 to 6 (also called Maternelle/Gardien/Kleuterschool). The year before first grade is spent learning introductory reading, writing and arithmetic skills along with play, art, and music. Once children reach age four, they are usually expected to go to school for both morning and afternoon sessions.

Some of the reasons that Americans have used Belgian schools are quite practical: the schools are close to home and free. The atmosphere of play makes it easier for an English-speaking child to fit in and learn another language.

There are some differences in the Belgian schools that Americans will notice right away. Classes are large but generally orderly. Children may sit at little tables and are sometimes assigned seats. Some schools issue report cards either on a monthly or bimonthly basis. Marks may be given in the form of stickers. Most schools offer a reasonably priced hot lunch, or soup, or children may bring a bag lunch. They are expected to bring their own snack. Meals are usually eaten in a cafeteria or multipurpose room, not the classroom. Young children may be offered a naptime on small camp beds.

Equipment varies from school to school. Whereas one school may have a separate outdoor play area for pre-schoolers with climbing equipment and sandbox, another will have a concrete yard with no obvious provisions for younger children. The pre-schools that are completely separate from the upper schools—perhaps in a separate location altogether—appear to have the best playground facilities for young children. Some schools have indoor multipurpose playrooms; others send children outdoors no matter what the weather.

Classrooms will also differ according to different teachers' styles and equipment. The Belgian pre-school is very much a part of the public educational system and is described as forming the traditional stage between family life and the school's own specific climate. Although it is not compulsory, a large majority of children in Belgium go to pre-school. Registration for communal schools takes place in the spring or late summer, although children may enter the system at any time after 2½. The documents required for registration usually include the child's passport and/or Belgian identity card. Check with your school or commune for more details.

Many Americans have found teachers in the pre-schools and particularly in the Flemish language schools who speak English. Also, in the Flemish schools, there may be a great deal of French and/or English spoken, depending on how many foreign and French-speaking children are enrolled. This may make adjustment easier for your child, as well as allowing parents to communicate easily with the teacher.

LA FARANDOLINE (For children ages 1-3)

A *Farandoline* is not exactly a pre-school. It could best be described as a French-speaking/creative workshop for children between the ages of 1-3. Originally begun in Woluwé-St.Pierre in 1977, there are now 36 centers in French-speaking communes in and around Brussels. Local or provincial authorities sponsor all. They were started primarily to give mothers a break from their young children and as places where mothers could meet.

Parents pay an inscription fee per month/per family, and then a fee per session/per child. The *Farandoline* meets two mornings a week from 9 a.m.-12 noon, often at a community center. Each one has up to 15 children cared for by a specialist, called an *animatrice*, who also has one mother to help her at each session.

It works out roughly that a mother stays one day a month. She doesn't pay for her child at the session. The main aim is to teach children to play with other children. They also learn to sing, dance, and paint.

The advantages of sending a young child to a *Farandoline* are that he/she may enter it at a very young age. It also offers a chance to discover local services and meet Belgian mothers and children in the area. The coordinators stress the importance of regular attendance, which is one of the admission conditions.

For more information about *La Farandoline*, please contact:

Ave. de Longueville 16
Tel.: (02) 770-8856

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND INTERNATIONAL PRE-SCHOOL DESCRIPTIONS

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>COMMUNE</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Brussels Sprouts Day Care (Operated by the Tri-Mission Association for USG employees)	Brussels	(02) 508-2290	36
Kindercrib	Tervuren	(02) 767-3039	37
Peter Pan (creche) Nursery School	Lasne	(02) 673-8539	38
Rijksbasisschool (This is a Flemish school with a great deal of English spoken.)	Overijse	(02) 687-8308	39
Mother Goose	Vossem	(02) 767-8360	40

In addition, many of the English language/international schools already described in this guide have pre-school programs (also described). These schools are:

- * St. John's International School
- * The International School of Brussels
- * The British School of Brussels
- * The Brussels English Primary School
- * The Brussels English Primary School 2 — Limal
- * The British Junior Academy
- * The British Primary School
- * The E.E.C. International School
- * The International Montessori School Tervuren

The Community Liaison Office also has information available about other pre-school programs.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS DAY CARE CENTER

28, Blvd. du Régent

1000 Brussels

Tel.: (02) 508-2290 or 2498

Fax: (02) 511-1626 (TMA)

Director:

Assistant Director: Agnes Gray, Rita Barborak, April Pierce and Oana Olaru

Children's Ages: 6 months to 10 years

This children's childcare center is administered by the Tri-Mission Association (TMA), an association of U.S Government employees, which operates under a charter granted by the Assistant Secretary for Administration, U.S Department of State. It offers full-time, part-time and hourly care to children of American and Belgian employees of the Tri-Mission as well as other diplomats and their guests.

Brussels Sprouts is located on the ground floor of a building adjacent to the American Embassy, one-half block from the Arts-Loi subway stop. It consists of several rooms, including a large play area filled with toys, a small kitchen, an arts and crafts room, a changing room, and a quiet room with cribs for napping babies. There is a daily schedule of activities, stories and crafts. In addition there are outings to the park, weather permitting.

Up to ten children will be accepted at any time, but only four of these may be under the age of eighteen months. Brussels Sprouts is continuously staffed by two employees and is administered by the Tri-Mission Association (TMA).

The Brussels Sprouts Day Care is open from 8:30a.m- 6p.m, Mondays through Fridays, except for American and Belgian public holidays.

The cost is 5 Euros per hour per child. There is a one-time registration fee of 25 Euros per family. The special rate for a whole day (over 7:45 hours) is 34 Euros. Therefore, the rate for a full week of full-time care is 170 Euros for the first child, 144.50 Euros for the second child, and 127.50 Euros for the third child. Rates are in Euros only.

If you have any questions about the Brussels Sprouts Day Care Center, or wish to reserve space for a child, please call 02/508-2290.

KINDERCRIB
At British School of Brussels

19 Leuvensesteenweg

3080 Tervuren

Tel.: (02) 767-3039

Email: admissions@britishschool.be

Website: www.britishschool.be/junior/default.htm

Director: Janice Wilson

Enrollment: 35 (2003)

School ages: 1-3 years

Kindercrib is an established English-speaking playgroup and pre-school in the suburb of Tervuren. Run by Janice Wilson, a British teacher with many years experience in early childhood education, the playgroup offers young children an introduction to school life.

The school is at the British School of Brussels. There is one adult for every five children. Occasionally a mother also helps out. Most children are native English-speakers, but the group is international.

Children may come a minimum of two sessions a week, from 8:30-5:00; mornings from 9-12:00 and afternoons from 2:00 to 5:00. Occasionally a child will be accepted for more mornings—for instance if he/she has a disability, but this is done on a case-by-case basis.

The children are usually divided into an older and younger group. There is always a supervised activity such as painting or projects as well as time for free play and stories. There is a “messy play” area in the back room. The school provides a snack at 10 a.m., and children play outdoors every day, weather permitting.

Children need not be toilet-trained to attend. There is no bus service. A summer program runs through July for 1-3 1/2 year-olds. The school currently has no openings, but parents are encouraged to apply in advance to be placed on a waiting list for future openings.

FEES: For current information, please contact the school directly.

PETER PAN ENGLISH NURSERY SCHOOL

Rue de Saules 3
1380 Lasne (Waterloo)

Tel: (02) 354-8418

Fax: (02) 354-6449

Email: info@peter-pan-nursery.org

Website: www.peter-pan-nursery.org

Headmistress: Laura McGuire

School Ages: 2 ½ to 5 years

Established in 1989, the Peter Pan English Nursery School is recognized for the high quality pre-school education it provides. Full-day and half-day sessions are offered depending on availability.

The language used within the school is English. For those with other languages as their mother tongue, The Nursery School provides an ideal environment within which children can acquire in a natural and unpressured way a good command of English as a second language.

Each school day is carefully prepared in advance to include some or all of the following activities: Verbal communication, reading, numbers, basic math, music, painting, modeling, basic computer skills, play periods with activities of choice and development of interpersonal skills.

Fees: For current information, please contact the school directly.

RIJSKBASISSCHOOL

Frans Halsdreef 2
3090 Overijse
Tel.: (02) 688-2231
Email: bs.overijse@pandora.be
Head teacher: Martine Cuypers

School ages: 2 1/2-6 years
* Class 1: 2 1/2-4 years
* Class 2: 4-5 years
* Class 3: 5-6 years

* NOTE: This pre-school is Flemish-speaking. However, the teachers use a great deal of English and French because of the large number of non-Flemish pupils in the school. A description of this school is included in the guide to give parents an idea of what a fairly typical Flemish pre-school is like.

This state school is located on the corner of a residential area in Overijse—a Brussels suburb about 25 minutes from the city center. Overijse is home to many expatriates, especially British and American, which accounts in part for the high number of foreign children at this school: 40-45 per cent.

The school consists of two large buildings that hold classrooms, a kitchen and one large multipurpose room. There are two classes: one for 2 1/2-4-year-olds and one for 5-6-year-olds. Children who continue in the state school system transfer to one of the primary schools in Overijse.

Each class is quite large—from 18 to 25 children—with only one teacher. However, this number of pupils is common in Belgian schools, both French and Flemish. Despite the numbers, there is reasonably good control of the class, and a lot of affection from the teachers.

Each class follows a different curriculum in the morning. The youngest one has a supervised activity—such as drawing or pasting—every day, as well as free play and music time. The teacher talks to the children during circle time and, despite the large class size, tries hard to give each child individual attention.

Classrooms are spacious, with low tables and chairs and plenty of artwork all around. Like many Belgian schools, large cartoon-like drawings have been painted on the windows. In front of the school is a fenced play area that includes climbing equipment, swings, a large concrete area for riding toys such as scooters, and wide grassy strips. Children are well supervised outside.

The older children have more structured schedules that concentrate on learning skills such as numbers, letters, and pre-reading. These classes have nature tables, reading corners and imaginative play areas. Children at this age (5-6) are expected to come every day for a full day, although it is not required.

Children bring their own snack to school. If they stay only a half-day, they are picked up by 12 noon. Otherwise they eat either a bag lunch or buy a hot lunch that they eat in the multipurpose room. After lunch the children are offered an opportunity to nap on small camp beds.

The afternoon period is more relaxed than the morning, with more time for free play. Classes are smaller, as many children have gone home (there may be only 6-8 children in some classes). Parents must pick up their children by 3:30, except on Wednesday, when school ends at 12 noon.

Field trips occur regularly, and children ride a mini-bus. There is a Parents' Committee that helps support parties and other special events but is not actively involved in the classroom. To join the committee, parents pay a fee. This money supports various school activities.

There is no bus service and no *garderie*. School ends in early June, and there is no summer program. Children must be toilet-trained to enter.

This type of school offers USG families a great deal of flexibility: children can go to school as little as one morning a week, or as often as 4 1/2 full days. Teachers speak to children in Flemish, but will use English or French with ease. Although classroom numbers are high, teachers appear to have an exceptionally warm relationship with pupils. The school is also a good way for Americans to get to know others in the community and is a viable alternative to a fee-paying English language pre-school.

FEES: There are no school fees. Parents must pay small amounts for miscellaneous items such as supplies, field trips, meals, etc.

MOTHER GOOSE

Smisstraat 1
3080 Vossem
Tel: (02) 767-8360
Reservations/Visits: 0498-273 697

Mother Goose provides a friendly home like atmosphere for children. A creche is provided for babies. Children will have a wide range of toys to play with and both lunch and afternoon snacks will be provided.

More structured activities will be provided for the playgroup. Some of the activities will include painting, play dough, pasting, singing, and group activities.

For children attending the Garderie, a wide variety of games, puzzles, storybooks and videos will be available to use and a snack will be provided.

Mother Goose is open Mondays to Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 pm. It is located near the British Primary School and the local school of Vossem. The crèche offers half days and full day attendance.

IV. PUTTING YOUR CHILD IN A BELGIAN SCHOOL

A significant number of American families have put one or more of their children in a Belgian school. This provides a free—or almost free—education with academic standards that compare well with those in the United States. It is also a special opportunity for cultural enrichment and personal challenge.

In order to explore the advantages and difficulties of this decision, we have talked with many of these families, with educators in Brussels and with a bilingual expert from the Flemish Free University of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, VUB). There is no magic formula for making the Belgian school experience work for your child, but the following comments should help you consider your options.

In general, most parents who have children in local schools feel positive about their education. Among the benefits mentioned were high academic standards, especially in math, good work habits, mental discipline and toughness. There are also the intangible benefits that come from learning to live, work and play in a foreign language. In addition, once a language other than English is learned, children see language as a natural part of their education. The knowledge of another language and culture can enhance their self-confidence and their tolerance of others, an outcome at least as important as the mastery of another language.

One important factor in successfully educating a child in a local school is that the parents be committed to the idea and thoroughly support it, even if they don't speak French/Flemish. Parents have commented that the first year is especially tough on them because they feel they must be positive about a school system that may in fact seem very alien.

Parents need to find out about the school and its programs in the same way they would learn about English language schools in Brussels. In practical terms this means visiting the school, becoming familiar with the programs, maintaining contact with the teachers, attending school meetings and, if necessary, arranging for tutorial help.

The beginning period for children attending school in a foreign language for the first time is a sensitive transitional experience. In an ideal situation, a child would progress from partial to total immersion in the language. Tutorial help may be necessary with homework. Children's television shows, books and tapes in French/Flemish can also be useful.

It is also important to choose a school that has a caring attitude, preferably one having had experience with foreigners. Some schools have adaptation (remedial) classes; some in addition organize classes for non-French/Flemish speaking students. Supervised study halls after school, which exist in some schools, can help to alleviate some of the problems with homework.

Different American families have put children into Belgian schools at all levels (*crèche*, pre-school, primary and secondary) with success. It's impossible to generalize about the best age to enter a child in a Belgian school. Some parents are concerned that only an exceptionally bright child could handle learning a second language. Learning a foreign language is a skill with more similarities to sports or music than academic learning. A person's ability to speak a second or third language fluently often comes from his/her having direct exposure to more than one language as a child.

Parents should be aware that although young children learn a language quickly, they also lose it rapidly. Opinions differ on the extent to which a language learned at an early age can later be reactivated. While younger children learn languages faster and more easily, it is generally believed that the older child (9-10 years and older) will retain or recall a second language

better. If the parents' prime objective is for the child to learn a language, they should consider whether or not the child would be able to study the second language from post to post. Similarly, while a child is being educated in French/Flemish, there should be a conscious effort made to keep up his/her reading, writing and oral skills in English in the home.

The decision to use a Belgian school should be made after parents have carefully considered their alternatives and examined their motivations. Differences between the American and Belgian educational systems should not be underestimated. However, it should be noted that families who have their children in Belgian schools, are committed to the idea, and have found the experience rewarding and valuable have compiled the following advice.

In general, Belgian schools offer a highly structured, rigorous, academic program. At an early age, children are expected to take tests, complete regular homework assignments and keep up with a full academic curriculum. It would probably be safe to say that children work harder at an earlier age in a Belgian school than in an American one.

Depending upon the school your child has previously attended, he/she may or may not find the course work more advanced. Children transferring from the American system into Belgian schools are not automatically put back one year, although this may be recommended for some children. Some parents have commented that their child learned virtually nothing but French in their first year. Although this may seem disheartening, children seem to catch up rapidly in other academic areas once they feel comfortable in the foreign language.

There is generally more emphasis on discipline than in the American system and behavior is more formal. Students frequently shake hands with their teachers before or after class; they may be expected to rise when an adult enters the room. As in the U.S., the individual teacher probably exerts the strongest influence in setting the tenor of discipline in a class.

Parents, as a group, do not appear to be so actively involved with schools in Belgium as they are in the States, though this attitude is changing to a more activist approach at some schools. Teachers are expected to teach; parents are expected to make sure their children show up for school properly prepared. Some schools have parents' associations, but their main purpose is fund-raising.

Parents of primary school children are usually invited to attend a class meeting at the beginning of the year. Later on there may be individual conferences. By making use of the child's assignment book (*journal de classe/dagbook*), parents and teachers can keep in touch with one another.

Once an American child is comfortable in French/Flemish, he/she may still find that his/her social life is not what it would be in America. Secondary school students are more acutely aware of the difference than primary school students. School dances and the typical extra curricular activities of an American high school are usually lacking in a Belgian school. Sports programs are not so heavily emphasized. Many of these activities take place but are organized by other institutions outside of the school.

Primary school children may find that their first friends in a Belgian school are other English-speaking students. Belgian children do not lead the same informal social life that most American children do. Birthday parties and special events provide the reason for inviting children over. A common complaint among Americans is that the Belgian child doesn't casually invite an American friend over.

Of course, the French/Flemish speaking American child has a much better chance of forming friendships with Belgian children, but it is not an automatic process. Playing with other English-speaking children who are attending Belgian schools helps to provide a bridge during the early months. If the other children are American, this keeps the child in touch with his/her own culture while reaching out to a new culture.

If your child is tackling French/Flemish spelling and grammar, it may be impossible to insist that he/she keep up with English spelling and grammar simultaneously. Letters to relatives and friends at home and reading in English should help. Vacations may also be a good time to do some more formal work in English. One possibility is to find out what texts a child in a comparable American grade would be using and then work with your child on this material. Some families have gone as far as to hire a tutor to work with their children in English. If your child is already receiving tutorial help in French/Flemish, time, energy and money may make this impossible.

Secondary school students and their parents should weigh carefully the pros and cons of the Belgian system particularly if the student has little or no French/Flemish to begin with. How hard is he/she willing to work? Will he/she miss the social life of a typical American teenager?

Finally, parents who do not speak French/Flemish should ask themselves how much of an effort they are going to make to learn the language and how are they going to communicate with the school while they are learning? How can they help their children with schoolwork or even read the notices that are sent home? There is no reason to assume that the teacher will speak English.

School supplies should only be purchased in Belgium after the teacher has told the children what to buy. Many schools have a store where supplies can be easily purchased. Another suggestion is to take the list distributed by the teacher to a stationery store where the clerk can help you. The school supplies may seem expensive, but teachers are serious about their stipulations.

If you seriously consider putting a child into a Belgian secondary school, you should bring with you an official, sealed transcript from his/her previous secondary school stating the years completed at the secondary level. This should be signed and authenticated by a representative of the Belgian Embassy in Washington. This document serves to procure an equivalent from the Belgian Ministry of Education.

School registration occurs in the spring and late summer. Most communes make an effort to publicize the dates. Schools open at the beginning of September and usually follow a calendar somewhat different from that of the Brussels American School and other English language/international schools.

IV—A. THE BELGIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM AND CURRICULUM

Belgian schools fall basically into two categories: official (State, Provincial and Communal schools) and non-State (*libre*), which includes Catholic schools. Official and Catholic education is free. One main difference between these categories is that state schools must offer a choice of religious studies whereas Catholic schools usually offer religious studies only in the Catholic faith.

Unlike in the United States, where parents who do not opt for private education must send their children to the public schools in their local districts, in Belgium parents can choose to send their children to any school outside their district at no extra cost.

Most private schools are state-subsidized. Those subsidized by the state are open to all children residing in Belgium, whatever their nationality. There are also free (*libre*) schools, which are allowed more flexibility by law to set their curricula. Two of these are École Decroly and L'Autre École, which have non-traditional teaching approaches.

The Maternelle/Bewaarschool (2 1/2-6 year-olds) is divided into three levels (*degres*): 2 1/2-4 years; 4-5 years and 5-6 years. (The Maternelle section may also be called Jardins d'Enfants). Some schools offer a nursery/*crèche* section for one 1/2-3-year-olds. The École Primaire/Lagere (primary school, 6-12 years) and the École Moyenne/Middelbaar (secondary 12-18 years) follow.

Traditionally, secondary schools have been known as *Athenées* (Boys) and *Lycées* (Girls). Schools administered by private funds and charging fees are usually *Colleges* or *Instituts*. Schools specializing in fine arts, music, languages, etc. are known as *Conservatoires*, *Academies* and *Instituts*.

All Belgian schools follow the same state curriculum which has clear-cut guidelines and is carefully prescribed at both primary and secondary levels so that there is consistency of achievement and content throughout the country (though the approach may vary slightly from school to school). High standards are uniformly maintained in all state-supported schools through frequent and meticulous Ministry inspections. Teaching is a respected profession in Belgium and rigorous standards at teacher training colleges ensure teaching of good quality at all levels.

For the sake of simplicity the following description of the Belgian curriculum refers to the French language schools. The Flemish schools differ in certain respects.

Since 1980, both primary and secondary school programs have been radically and thoroughly revised in the interests of a more flexible approach to learning using more active methods and greater orientation towards the real world. Thus the old criticism of Belgian education being based on rote learning of facts and rigid exams is no longer fair, though the system is still more formal than in the U.S.

Brussels also has a number of schools that offer alternative teaching methods, such as École Decroly, École Hamaide, L'Autre École, L'École Ouverte and several Rudolf Steiner schools.

The new educational system is called *Renove*. Primary and secondary school class periods have now been set at 32 per week, with Wednesday afternoon free, though optional programs (sports, art and music, for example) are often organized at these times. Schools are closed on Saturday.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The *Renove* primary program mainly emphasizes math and French (approximately eight periods each per week). Personal and social education receives the next largest slot of time, while the rest of the schedule is equally divided between moral or religious education, human sciences, technical and scientific activities, psychomotor and aesthetic activities, and physical education. Grounding in the “three R’s” is important.

The math program is particularly imaginative and well developed and is usually thought to be in advance of what is being done in U.S. schools at the same level. More written work is demanded of the younger grade child than his/her American counterpart. And there is more homework. There is still perhaps less emphasis on the creative side than is thought desirable in the U.S., but most schools use the very active local cultural facilities to advantage, and in the schools visited, the art and creative work was quite impressive.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The secondary school *Renove* curriculum has been designed so that specialization is gradual and rational, geared to the potential of the student and his/her future needs. The early years show a solid common curriculum, which becomes smaller as one moves up the school, while the time spent on optional specialized subjects grows longer. The strengths (and prestige) of the system lie in math and the sciences.

The first two years of the secondary school are known as the observation stage where the student is introduced to a wide range of subjects, and his/her strengths and tendencies can be reasonably ascertained before specialization is required. The following subject breakdown and description is typical of the organization within the *Renove* system:

In the first year all students follow the same timetable (*formation commune*). The focus is on French (five hours a week), math and a second language (four hours). For both French and math there is one period a week when the class is split into smaller units according to ability level. Three hours a week is devoted to environmental studies, for which history, geography and social science teachers combine to synthesize a topic approach to the subject. Science is allotted three hours a week, with the main emphasis on biology and secondly on physics. P.E. is given three times a week and ethics twice. A further small group of experimental or trial studies offers a choice: Latin, technical studies or art, for two periods a week.

The first year program is completed with two hours a week of recreational pursuits (*activités complémentaires*) usually in the form of workshops. These may include woodwork, modeling, photography, etc., according to the skills of the teachers and resources of the school.

The second year basic studies program is the same except that the second language may be taken at a “strong” or “weak” level. There are more optional studies such as Latin, science, socio-economics, art, music and technical studies. Students continue to take two hours of recreational pursuits a week.

Remedial classes are built into the system in the first two years for those who lag behind in any subject, for any reason. These may be organized inside or outside school hours. A student whose progress is not considered satisfactory by the end of the year will be required to review the work during the vacation and be tested on it at the beginning of the new school year.

Testing and assessment in the basic subjects is far more flexible now than under the traditional system. Tests (*contrôles*) are given at the discretion of the individual teacher. Reports, usually

once a semester, contain detailed assessments of the student's all-around progress as well as the results of tests. Some schools still have grades, while others give descriptive terms: *insuffisant* (insufficient), *bien* (good), etc.

During the third and fourth year of the secondary, called the orientation stage, obligatory basic studies are slightly reduced and a third language offered. A longer list of basic options now permits the students to begin making choices leading towards the career or degree choice he/she is considering.

A course in math, science, and a second language must be taken, but may be followed at "strong" (i.e. 6 hours a week) or "weak" (3-4 hours) levels. Other basic options vary slightly from school to school but would typically include economic and social science, Latin, psychology and human relations, laboratory science, technical education, typing, Greek, and possibly an art subject. In the fourth year the program is the same but a fourth language may be offered.

In the final stage of the secondary school, the fifth and sixth years that are called the determination stage, the student is obliged by law to follow the same options in both years. At this point the common program followed by all students has shrunk to eight hours a week and consists of religion, human science and P.E., while the list of basic and complementary options has extended to about 28 courses, consisting mainly of languages, science (broken down into many specialized branches) and math, offered at three levels. One course each of French, math, chemistry, physics and biology is obligatory.

The diploma awarded at the end of the final year permits access to all Belgian universities and technical schools.

For further information about Belgian public school curricula, please contact the following agencies:

- * Ministère de l'Education et de la Formation
Recherche(French)
Rue Royale 136
1010 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 211-4211
- * Gemeenschapsminiter van Onderwijs (Flemish)
Rijksadministratief Centrum
Arcadengebouw, Blok F (6de verdieping)
1010 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 210-6211

For further information about both French and Flemish Catholic schools, please contact:

- * Secretariat National de l'Enseignement Catholique/
Nationale Secretariaat van het Katholiek Onderwijs
St. Adresseplein 12
1070 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 529-0411

IV—B. BELGIAN SCHOOLS

The schools listed here are simply examples of what you might find among the hundreds of local schools. For more information about schools in your area, including crèches, contact your local *maison communale*. Friends and neighbors are also great sources of information. Call and visit the schools that interest you to see for yourself whether one might be right for your child.

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>COMMUNE</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>Page</u>
College Jean XXIII	Woluwé-St.-Pierre	(02) 771-0178	51
École Communal de Joli-Bois	Woluwé-St.-Pierre	(02) 773-1805 (02) 773-1801 (02) 773-1806	52
École Decroly	Uccle	(02) 374-1703	53
École Hamaide	Uccle	(02) 374-7890	54
École Singelijn	Woluwé-St.-Lambert	(02) 770-0622	55
Institut des Dames de Marie	Woluwé-St.-Lambert	(02) 733-1187	56
Le Verseau	Bierges	(01) 023-1717	57
Lycée Mater Dei	Woluwé-St-Pierre	(02) 770-0399	59

COLLEGE JEAN XXIII

Boulevard de la Woluwé 22
1150 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 771-0178
Fax: (02) 771-1765
Email: courrier@jean23.be
Director: Mr. Schtickzelle M.

Website: www.jean23.be

School ages: 2 1/2-18 years
* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
* Primaire: 6-11 years
* Secondaire: 12-18 years

Jean XXIII, established in 1956, is a traditional Catholic school with a strong academic program and an emphasis on a calm and disciplined atmosphere. There are two *maternelle* and primary sections, both co-ed. The Parmentier School is located on a residential street near Avenue Tervuren, giving the feeling of a small, family school. The Woluwe School is near the Woluwe parks.

The *maternelle* section on Avenue Parmentier has brightly painted classrooms, with plenty of art and drawings on the walls. Children are taught pre-reading skills and numbers as well as having plenty of time for free play. A hot lunch is available. There is a sandy play area with wooden play equipment behind the school. Children may come for a full day or half-day.

The primary and secondary programs at the other building follow the standard Belgian curriculum. This includes demanding classes in math, history, geography, French, Flemish, as well as art, music and gym. The religious approach is described as open rather than traditional. Classes in the 4th and 6th year of primary school go on an extended field trip.

The secondary school has a rigorous academic schedule. Students take a broad range of classes in the earlier grades and become more focused in the final years. Optional courses include Latin, Flemish, English and research activities (history, geography, science, math).

Jean XXIII has experience with American students and a positive attitude towards them, though currently there are few foreign pupils at this school. The school is proud of its academic tradition, which is especially strong in classics, math, and science. Ninety per cent of its students go on to university. In addition to the regular P.E. classes throughout the school, sports are available after school.

FEES: The school is free except for miscellaneous expenses such as meals, supplies, etc.

ÉCOLE COMMUNAL DE JOLI-BOIS

Val des Epinettes 3

1150 Brussels

Tel.: (02) 773-1805 (Maternelle)

(02) 773-1801 (Primaire); FAX: 773-1801

(02) 770-3657 (Secondaire)

Email: ecom.jbm@woluwe1150.irisnet.be

Director: E. Martin

School ages: 2 ½ to 18 years

* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years

* Primaire: 6-11 years

* Secondaire: 12-18 years

Joli Bois is a state-supported French-speaking communal school in Woluwé-Saint-Pierre. It is a fairly typical example of a commune school except that it has a relatively large number of foreign students, especially in the early grades.

The school is located in a complex of buildings in a residential area near Avenue Tervuren—about 15 minutes from the center of Brussels. Each of the three schools that make up Joli-Bois—the Maternelle, Primaire and Secondaire sections—is in a separate building. There are also two *crèches* (ages up to 2 1/2) associated with Joli-Bois, but they are at a different location. Attached to the *primaire* school is a separate Dutch-speaking primary school. There is also a music academy connected to the complex.

Facilities in the *maternelle* section are well maintained. Classrooms are bright and attractive. Classes are large, with generally more than 20 children to one teacher. There is no special accommodation made for English-speaking children.

The primary and secondary schools follow the standard Belgian state curriculum. Among the classes offered are music, gym, art, English, and Dutch.

The schools emphasize consideration of the child as a reflection of global humanity, reinforcing a deep respect for individual differences. Programs develop the will to succeed, foster individual potential, autonomy, and a sense of responsibility, all in an environment that tends to emulate an actual democracy. The whole educational team is deeply committed to using current pedagogical and psychological techniques.

A hot lunch is available for a fee, or students may bring a bag lunch. The playground for older students consists of a blacktop area. The *maternelle* section has a separate concrete playground with climbing equipment. There is a *garderie* service both before and after school for which parents must pay a fee. There is a limited school bus service.

FEES: Joli-Bois is free except for miscellaneous expenses such as meals and field trips.

ÉCOLE DECROLY

Drève des Gendarmes 45
1180 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 374-1703
Fax: (02) 374-0271
Email: ec.decroly@sec.cfwd.be
Head: Francoise Guillaume

Website: profor.be/ecoles/decroly

School Ages: 2 1/2-18 years

- * Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
- * Primaire: 6-11 years
- * Secondaire: 12-18 years

Founded in 1907 by the famous progressive educator Dr. Ovide Decroly, the school is still a focal point of study for educators from all over the world. The basic educational principle is to stimulate the interest, activity, and initiative of the child using the world around him/her as a starting point.

The school is an independent non-profit-making organization, free and open to all. It is state-subsidized. There are usually some foreign students enrolled; however, places are rarely available except for the entering *maternelle* class, so parents are encouraged to apply early.

Buildings of different epochs cluster around the original rambling Uccle schoolhouse which commands a view over the houses and gardens of the Chaussée de Waterloo. The Forêt de Soignes stretches behind. The *maternelle* classrooms are housed in a quiet area a few minutes away.

There are twelve classes at primary level. Adaptation classes are provided to help any child catch up in any subject. No special courses are provided for non-Francophone pupils, and the school expects that the family will share the responsibility of helping the child in the new language.

The school follows Dr. Decroly's teaching philosophy, "For life and by life" in all areas of the curriculum, from math to the arts. Drama, dance, photography, sculpture, and printing are all offered. P.E. and swimming are offered at the primary level, and clubs offer soccer, gym, basketball and other sports on Wednesday afternoons, when the school is closed.

There are no exams in the primary school, but emphasis is placed on close continuous assessment. Exam results are also less important in secondary school than overall achievement.

Teaching at the secondary level is organized so that the same teacher covers a cluster of subjects and topics. Classes are discussion-based and involve much individual research and participation. Discipline at the Decroly is a matter of individual responsibility and respect for others. Secondary school students take charge of playground duty, lunch duty, and corridor behavior.

For more information, please contact the school directly.

FEES: The school is free except for miscellaneous small expenses.

ÉCOLE HAMAIDE

Avenue Hamoir 31
1180 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 374-7890
Fax : (02) 374-7890
Email: hamaide@brusl.com
Director: Béatrice Gizzi

School ages: 2 1/2-12 years
* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
* Primaire: 6-12 years

Amelie Hamaide, pupil and disciple of the famous educator, Dr. Ovide Decroly, founded this school in 1934. It is now divided into two equal, self-contained sections under one director, in similar rambling old houses in Uccle. Class size does not exceed 23 children, and there are usually a number of foreign pupils.

The school follows the philosophy, "the school for life, by life". It uses the standard Belgian school curriculum leading to the secondary school, but its methods are the "active participation" concepts of Dr. Decroly. These include learning through observation of the natural environment, understanding, and solving problems individually instead of memorizing given facts, and involving children in the life and organization of the school by giving them various responsibilities.

Mornings are devoted to academic work. Four afternoons (excluding Wednesday) involve workshops run by the teachers. These include modeling, printing, weaving, basketwork, folk dancing, sports, and painting. These groups cut across the age range and are monitored by older pupils. In addition, each class presents a play once a year, written and produced by the children themselves.

The school offers soccer, basketball, and baseball. Swimming is offered starting in the third grade. Any students showing learning difficulties the school's full-time remedial teachers assist. Reports are issued throughout the year, but no exams are set until the fifth and sixth grades. Pupils leaving at sixth grade level are prepared for secondary school, whether of the traditional, modern (*Renove*) or Decroly type. There is no bus service, and parents organize car pools.

FEES: The school is officially free. However, there is a participation fee requested to cover extra costs of hiring teachers. For more detailed information, please contact the school directly.

ÉCOLE SINGELIJN

Avenue Chapelle aux Champs 67
1200 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 770-0622
Fax : (02) 770-0348
Head: Annie Jonas

School Ages: 2 1/2-12 years
* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
* Primaire: 6-12 years

NOTE: At the present time (2003), applications are not being taken for new students. U.S. Government children have attended in the past, and it is possible that the situation may change. For this reason, the following school description has been included in this guide.

École Singelijn was founded in 1951 as an *École Libre* and offers an education in French to boys and girls, ages 2 1/2 through grade 6. Although it is a Catholic school administered by laymen, its student body is made up of children from varying religious backgrounds.

The school is located right off Woluwé Boulevard not far from the Woluwé Shopping Center in Woluwé-Saint-Lambert. Its modern buildings have two large play areas with slides and climbing equipment.

Singelijn is proud of its reputation for offering a rigorous academic program and maintaining very high standards. There are a few American and other foreign children in the school. The school offers assistance to non-French-speaking students with adaptation classes.

Several hours of the week are devoted to classes in gymnastics, sports, swimming and music. Religion class is required, with a choice among four options: Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or ethics. The school is closed on Wednesday afternoons, but optional programs are offered.

Beginning with the first grade, *controles* (examinations) are given and a detailed report with grades is sent home to parents. The child's place in class is noted on the report. From the third grade on the study of Dutch is obligatory for all children.

Ten classes make up the Jardin d'Enfants (*maternelle*) program. The classrooms for this age group are bright and well maintained. During the last year of this program, children are introduced to reading, writing and math.

Singelijn offers a challenging academic program at the primary level following traditional Belgian teaching methods. Parents are strongly advised to see that their children do their homework, get enough rest, and show up for school regularly. The teachers are accessible to parents, but there is no formal PTA.

There is a hot lunch program, or children may bring a bag lunch. A *garderie* is available for after-school care. There is no bus service, but parents arrange carpools and taxi service. For more information, please contact the school directly.

FEES: Singelijn is free except for small charges such as school materials, meals and field trips.

INSTITUT DES DAMES DE MARIE (École du Bonheur)

Rue Vergote 40
1200 Woluwé-St.-Lambert
Tel.: (02) 374-1703

School Ages: 2 1/2-18 years
* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
* Primaire: 6-11 years
* Secondaire: 12-18 years

The school is a private co-ed Catholic institution, administered by laymen. The school has a nursery, primary and secondary section (the nursery and primary sections are known as L'École du Bonheur). The class size is quite large (22-25 students); there is more than one class in each grade level.

The school is located in a residential area in the commune of Woluwé-St.-Lambert. The playground facilities are not large. The school does make use of the commune facilities such as the swimming pool and ice rink. Gym is offered twice each week during regular school hours.

The nursery functions as a *garderie*, or supervised baby-sitting, before and after school. It remains open until 6 p.m. and operates during vacations for working parents. Parents pay a fee for this service and must make arrangements for it in advance.

At the age of six, children enter the primary section. The overall curriculum stresses language, science and math as do all Belgian schools, but emphasis is also placed on the humanities. The school is French-speaking but the study of Dutch is begun in the third grade and is required for all students.

The school offers class trips in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades to places such as the Belgian coast and Switzerland. On these trips the children usually stay in houses or *chateaux* owned by the commune. These trips are especially valuable to the beginning French-speaking child.

The school offers a hot lunch program, or the student may bring a bag lunch from home. There is no bus service; however, the school is located close to metro and bus systems.

FEES: The school is free. Parents pay a small amount for books and extra activities or trips.

LE VERSEAU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Rue de Wavre 60
1301 Bierges-Wavre
Tel.: Primary: (01) 023-1717
Fax: (01) 024-1700
Email: verseau@compaqnet.be

Website: <http://users.win.be/w0080095>

School Ages: 3-18 years
* Kindergarten: 3-5 years
* Primary: 6-11 years (2 levels per class year)
* Secondary: 12-18 years

The École Internationale "Le Verseau" was founded in 1969 by a Belgian couple, Hugues and Suzanne Van der Straten-Ponthoz. The couple envisioned a school where teachers and pupils of different philosophies and cultures would work together in an atmosphere in which all the pupils' abilities would be freely developed. The school and classrooms were designed for maximum light and fresh air, with wide views over the rolling countryside near Wavre—about 20 kilometers from downtown Brussels off the E411 freeway.

Le Verseau is an international bilingual (French and English) school that follows the Belgian curriculum as well as offering English courses leading to the U.K.'s Advanced (A) level examinations. The school emphasizes an active approach to education, with far more creative arts and sport than is usual in most Belgian schools. Its special features are its bilingual program, relatively small class sizes, and spacious facilities.

Currently about 47 per cent of the student body is native English speakers; the rest are Belgian. The bilingual program is particularly advantageous to the English-speaking students. In addition to the standard state curriculum taught in French, all students have 50 minutes of intensive English a day, during which they are divided into anglophile and francophone sections.

The main primary and secondary level anglophile English program is taught by experienced native speakers who aim to maintain a high standard in the mother tongue that will enable the pupils easily to re-enter English or American schools or a college of good standing. The small class size (usually between four and 12 pupils; 18 pupils maximum) permits the intensive work and close individual attention, which, in addition to the quality of the teaching, have helped to ensure the success of the school.

At the primary level the English program consists of nature study, history, reading, literature, and writing. At the secondary level, students develop the language, writing, and critical skills required for the U.K.'s "A" level examinations. (The exams are optional).

Children in the Kindergarten program learn English, French, music, rhythm, crafts, and swimming. Classrooms are bright and filled with artwork. In the first and second primary years, students have regular tests. Classes are small (a maximum of 20 children) and close contact is maintained with parents through frequent meetings to follow the child's progress. In addition to French, children learn Dutch beginning in grade 5.

The school has an active sports program with specialist P.E. teachers at all levels, including Kindergarten. Le Verseau has 10 acres of rolling property which include large playing fields and well-equipped playgrounds (unusual for Belgium.) Sports offered include rugby, soccer, basketball, gymnastics, and cross-country. Games are organized at lunch break and in recreation periods

as well as on Wednesday afternoon, when there is no school. There is a well-equipped gymnasium.

The secondary school offers the standard *renove* course with strong programs in languages, math and science. There are science and language labs as well as computer instruction. All students may take a third language (Spanish or German). Art, music, and field trips are part of the curriculum. There is remedial help in French and math.

There is no formal PTA, but there is some parent participation in various school activities. Discipline does not appear as strict as at many other Belgian schools.

A hot lunch and hot soup service is available. There is a bus service.

NOTE: Le Verseau usually has a long waiting list. If you are interested in this school, you must contact it as soon as possible in order to enroll your child.

FEES: For current information, please contact the school directly.

LYCÉE MATER DEI

Avenue de l'Aviation 72
1150 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 770-0399

School Ages: 2 1/2-18 years
* Maternelle: 2 1/2-5 years
* Primaire: 6-11 years
* Secondaire: 12-18 years

The Mater Dei Catholic School is a large complex on the western edge of Woluwé-St.-Pierre, close to Stockel. There are separate Flemish and French sections. The French section consists of three schools: a *maternelle* for children 2 1/2-6-years-old; a primary school for children 6-12-years-old; and a *lycée* for students 12-18-years-old.

The school usually has a relatively large number of foreign pupils, especially in the *maternelle* and primary school. One reason for this might be the adaptation classes that give foreign students entering the primary school a chance to integrate quickly through accelerated courses in French. These classes are concentrated in the first trimester, although additional outside tutoring is also advisable. It is school policy to let a new student enter at grade level and go up with the rest of his/her class at the end of the year rather than repeating a year.

The primary school is housed in a spacious, well-designed block that harmonizes with the traditional red brick *lycée* buildings established in 1959. The curriculum follows Ministry of Education regulations, with the addition of religious instruction in the Catholic faith. There are also classes given by specialists in subjects such as grammar, literature, song, and speech. Apart from this, the school makes no special offerings in the arts since the commune and surrounding districts are exceptionally rich in all kinds of cultural opportunities, both private and free.

Choirs, sports, music and art lessons, carpentry, folk dancing and other activities are organized in the lunch hours through the parents' association. There is a small charge for activities on a trimester basis.

The secondary school offers the standard *Renove* system. An orientation stream is offered in the first year, designed to help students who are not yet completely prepared for the curriculum. The school offers a number of activities during the lunch hour including sports, jazz, photography, and music.

There is an active parents association, and the trimester school magazine keeps parents in touch with what is happening throughout the school. There is an extensive bus service, since many pupils come from outlying areas.

FEES: The school is free except for small, miscellaneous costs for school trips, materials, etc.

**IV—C. ADDITIONAL BELGIAN SCHOOLS (French/Flemish) USED OR RECOMMENDED
BY U.S. GOVERNMENT FAMILIES**

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>COMMUNE</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Ecole Communale de La Hulpe (Primaire)	La Hulpe	(02) 653-7015
L'Autre École	Auderghem	(02) 660-7238
Centre Scolaire du Lindthout (Primaire)	Woluwé-St. Lambert	(02) 736-0094
Athénée Royal de Woluwé-St.-Pierre	Woluwé-St. Pierre	(02) 770-0620
Ecole du Sacre Coeur	Woluwé-St. Pierre	(02) 731-6787
Ecole du Sacré Coeur de Stockel	Stockel	(02) 779-0781
Ecole Notre-Dame des Graces	Woluwé-St. Pierre	(02) 771-2746
Ecole Communal Chant D'Oiseau	Woluwé-St. Pierre	(02) 773-0681
Vrije Kleuterschool	Overijse	(02) 687-5733
Sint-Martinusschool	Overijse	(02) 687-7483
Ecole Gardienne	La Hulpe	(02) 653-5015
Princesse Paola	Woluwé-St. Lambert	(02) 761-2895
Ecole Parc Malou	Woluwé-St. Lambert	(02) 761-2882
Ecole Van Meyel	Woluwé-St.-Lambert	(02) 761-2889
Les Aigrettes	Watermael-Boitsfort	(02) 673-1070

V. APPENDIX

V—A. EDUCATIONAL ALLOWANCES

The following information is offered to employees of civilian agencies who are subject to the Standardized Regulations. For more information on allowances, please contact:

* The Financial Management Center, Joint Administrative Services (JAS/FMC), U.S. Embassy, Brussels. (02) 508-2368

* Allowances and differentials — rates and regulations, Office of Allowances (A/OPR/ALS), U.S. Dept. of State. (703) 875-7906.

EDUCATIONAL ALLOWANCE RATES IN BRUSSELS:

The education allowance in Brussels is based on fees at the International School of Brussels. These fees are reviewed yearly. Since an American curriculum is available in Brussels, the “away from post” education allowance is the same as the at post allowance.

Some private schools in Brussels may charge more than the allowance amounts for tuition, fees and busing, since fees may vary by grade level at the various schools listed in this booklet. Please check with the individual schools for further information on costs. For the most up-to-date information on allowances, please be in touch with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Allowances and with the Financial Management Center (telephone numbers above).

ALLOWANCES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS:

A child with special needs is one who differs developmentally from a normal child as a result either of a physical, mental, or emotional handicap or of a specific learning disability. For those families with children with special needs, we recommend the booklet entitled Educations Options for Foreign Service Members, published by the Family Liaison Office (M/DGP/FLO), U.S. Department of State. This book offers a great deal of information to USG families regarding resources available and is available on intranet at <http://hrweb.hr.state.gov/flo/train>.

If your child appears to have a special education need, and you are about to be posted abroad, we recommend the following:

* Contact the Employee Consultation Service, Office of Medical Services(M/DGP/MED/ECS), U.S. Department of State, to schedule an educational evaluation (202-647-4929). M/DGP/MED, as a result of this examination, can determine whether the special education allowance is appropriate for your child. The allowance for special education varies according to whether an adequate educational program is available at post or in the U.S.

* Contact the Office of Overseas Schools (A/OPR/OS), U.S. Department of State (703-875-7800). Families about to go overseas can get specific information about which special education programs are available to them at individual posts.

* Contact schools in Brussels directly to determine if they are equipped to deal with the special needs of your child.

* Contact the schools directly for up-to-date information and the Financial Management Center (32-2-508-2368), for information on school allowances.

V—B. RESOURCE FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

* **Exceptional Family Member Department, SHAPE**
Tel: (065) 44-5214

* **Mental Health Clinic, SHAPE**
Tel: (065) 44-5801

* **Community Help Service (CHS)**
Rue St.-Georges 102 Box 20
1050 Brussels
Tel: (02) 647-6780
Fax: (02) 646-7273
Website: www.chsbelgium.org
Help Line (02) 648-4014

CHS offers a full range of diagnostic and remedial services by an English-speaking professional staff. Counseling, testing and evaluation procedures are carried out and the appropriate referrals for ongoing help can be made. There is a charge for services.

* **Community Liaison Office (JAS/CLO),**
Joint Administrative Services,
U.S. Embassy
28, Blvd. du Regent
1000 Brussels
Tel: (02) 508-2227 and 2289
Fax: (02) 502-6247

E-Mail: RichardSA2@state.gov, mcguiress@state.gov

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m.-4 p.m.

APO address: PSC 82, Box 002
APO AE 09710

This office has been set up to help USG newcomers to Brussels both before and after their arrival at post. Please call or write to the office if you have specific questions concerning your child. Whenever possible, up-to-date and individualized information will be sent to you. In addition, the Overseas Briefing Center, the Family Liaison Office and the Office of Overseas Schools have a fairly wide range of up-to-date school brochures.

V—C. ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) AND INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) PROGRAMS

The Advanced Placement (AP) program consists of challenging college-level courses and examinations for secondary school students. About 6,000 high schools in the U.S. and many international schools offer the program (please refer to individual school descriptions and catalogues for further information on specific offerings).

Most of the U.S. colleges and universities that AP candidates ultimately attend (some 2,000 institutions) give academic credit (sometimes up to sophomore year) or waive introductory courses to those whose grades are acceptable. Some of the most selective U.S. colleges are among these institutions. Thus, there are academic and possible financial benefits to the AP program as well as greater academic challenge for the student at the secondary school level. Currently the Brussels American School, St. John's International School and The International School of Brussels offer AP courses.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a high-level examination in six subjects chosen from a broad range of options. The program usually takes the last two years of secondary school.

The IB program was established in 1967 to meet the needs of the growing highly mobile student population. It is recognized by universities in more than 62 countries and often offers the same consideration for admission to a given university as someone possessing the national qualifications of that country. However, the IB diploma is not a guarantee of admission to any university.

The IB is well recognized in the U.S., with 180 schools offering the program. Many of the best U.S. universities offer sophomore standing or waive degree requirements to holders of IB diplomas.

Among the six subjects studied, the student must take three at Higher Level and three at Subsidiary Level. There must be two languages among these subjects. The student must also follow a course in the Theory of Knowledge, submit an Extended Essay in one of his/her six subjects and pursue a creative, artistic or social service activity during the entire two-year period.

The IB course and exams are designed to broaden the mind and develop its cognitive powers rather than to test factual knowledge. The exams are administered by the IB office in Geneva. They may be spread over the two year period. Students may take several IB courses without taking the complete diploma. A Higher Level pass is considered equivalent to passing AP examinations.

St. John's International School and The International School of Brussels are the only schools which offer the full IB program in Brussels.

V—D. SCHOOLS OFFERING AN ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE OR COURSE OF STUDY

The following schools may also be of interest to USG families:

1. Deutsche Schule Brussel
71, Lange Eikstraat
1970 Wezembeek-Oppem
Tel.: (02) 785-0130 Fax: (02) 785-0141 E-mail: ds.brussel@dsb.skynet.be
Website: www.dasan.de/bruessel
* Offers standard German curriculum.
2. Japanese School of Brussels
133, Avenue des Meuniers
1160 Auderghem
Tel.: (02) 672-1038 Fax: (02) 672-9527 E-Mail: office@japanese-school-brussels.be
Website: www.japanese-school-brussels.be
* Follows Japanese curriculum. Also Saturday courses in Japanese.
3. Lycée Français Jean Monnet
9, Avenue du Lycée Français
1180 Brussels
Tel.: (02) 374-5878 Fax: (02) 374-9843 Website: www.lyceefrançais-jmonnet.be
Affiliated with the French *Lycée* system.
Offers special classes for English-speaking children.
Over 50 nationalities. Used by USG families. Active sports, theater program.
4. Scandinavian School of Brussels—École Reine Astrid
5, Square d'Argenteuil
1410 Waterloo
Tel.: (02) 357-0670 E-Mail: scandinavian.school@ssb.be
Fax (02) 357-0680 Website: www.ssb.be
* Follows Scandinavian curriculum. Some courses in English or French.

The following Jewish schools in Brussels all follow the Belgian curriculum as well as offering lessons in Judaism:

5. Athénée Maimonide de Bruxelles
67, Boulevard Poincaré
1070 Brussels Head: Raphael Benizri
Tel.: (02) 523-6336 E-Mail: info@maimo.be
Fax: (02) 523-3702 Website: www.maimo.be
6. Athénée Ganenou
3, Rue du Melkriek
1180 Brussels Email: infogangenou.com
Tel.: (02) 376-1176 General Manager: Claude Darmon
Fax: (02) 322-1100 Head: Norbert Cige
7. École Beth Aviv
123, Avenue Molière
1190 Brussels Head: Pierre Marion
Tel.: (02) 347-3719 Fax: (02) 346-4727 E-Mail: beth-aviv@skynet.be

V—E. BOOK AND PERIODICAL REFERENCE LIST

- * **Brussels “BULLETIN”** Weekly magazine available in local bookstores and as a reference at the Community Liaison Office for the U.S. Government community.
- * **NEWCOMER—AN INTRODUCTION TO LIFE IN BELGIUM** A magazine published twice a year by “Bulletin” staff. Available in the CLO office.
- * **PHONE BOOK**—Brussels area (02) white pages. For schools in the 19 communes within the city limit, look under each commune heading, then find *Enseignement* (French) or *Onderwijs* (Flemish). For communes outside city limits, look under commune name.
- * **GUIDE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT** (Education Guide) — Latest edition. Available in many local bookstores.
- * **LE GRAND BRUXELLES DES TOUT-PETITS** — Latest edition. Detailed guide to children's services, schools, stores, etc. in Brussels area. Available in many local bookstores.
- * **HINTS FOR LIVING IN BELGIUM** — Latest edition. Published by The American Women's Club of Brussels. Available at the Club, some bookstores, the TMA store and the CLO.
- * **SHOULD I CONSIDER A BELGIAN SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD?**: Available from The American Women's Club of Brussels.
- * **COMMUNITY HELP SERVICE CALENDAR** — Latest edition. Available in English-language bookstores and the CLO.
- * **FAMILY GUIDE TO BELGIUM** — Latest edition. Published by the Community Help Service and available in English-language bookstores.
- * **Brussels Weekly** Published every Friday by the CLO Office, Joint Administrative Services (JAS/CLO) for the U.S. Government community. Includes information about school activities.
- * **L'ENSEIGNEMENT FONDAMENTAL** (BASIC EDUCATION) Comprehensive school guide covering the entire Brussels area. Published by Service d'Information sur les Etudes et les Professions (SIEP) and available from its office at Chaussée de Wavre 205, 1040 Brussels, (02) 640-0832 and 640-1851.
- * **EDUCATION OPTIONS FOR FOREIGN SERVICE MEMBERS**. Published by the Family Liaison Office. Full of useful information.

V—F. TELEPHONE REFERENCE LIST

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE—BRUSSELS

Joint Administrative Services, U.S. Embassy (02) 508-2227, 2289

* General school information, including specific school brochures.

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICES (NATO SUPPORT ACTIVITY)

(02) 717-9783

* Local Belgian school information; local child care information.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CENTER (FMC)—BRUSSELS

Joint Administrative Services, U.S. Embassy: (02) 508-2368

* Current allowance, school fees information.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE/OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

(703) 875-7800

* General and detailed school information, including specific school brochures.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE/FAMILY LIAISON OFFICE — EDUCATION COUNSELOR

(202) 647-1670

* General information and referral as well as specific school brochures.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE/OVERSEAS BRIEFING CENTER (OBC)

(703) 302-7277

* Files on Brussels schools, including specific school brochures.

AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUB OF BRUSSELS

(02) 358-4753

Website: www.awcb.org

* Referral and contact for "Mother's of Young Children" group.

COMMUNITY HELP SERVICE—BRUSSELS

(02) 647-6780

website: www.chsbelgium.org

* Diagnostic counseling and testing.

BRUSSELS CHILDBIRTH TRUST

(02) 215-3377

Website: www.bctbelgium.com

* Support group with meetings throughout Brussels area.

BRITISH & COMMONWEALTH WOMEN'S CLUB BRUSSELS

(02) 772-5313

Website: www.xpats.com/clubs/id/bcws.htm

* Referral and contact for "Mums-N-Youngs" program.

OFFICE DE LA NAISSANCE ET DE L'ENFANCE (ONE)

(02) 539-3979

* Responsible for supervising all paid child care for children under the age of 7, within the French speaking community.

SERVICE D'INFORMATION SUR LES ETUDES ET LES PROFESSIONS (SIEP)

(02) 640-0832 and 640-1851

* A mine of information about Belgian schools.